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Cover Design by *Kenneth Macpherson*
Paris Correspondent—*Sylvia Beach*

New York Correspondent—*Kenneth Macpherson*

The Editor is glad to consider manuscripts and will be grateful to those authors who save secretarial side-tracking by enclosing addressed envelopes as well as stamps. Unsolicited contributions accompanied by neither will not be returned.

All communications should be addressed to LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY, 26 Maiden Lane, London, W.C. 2.

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NEW CONTRIBUTORS

ELISABETH BERGNER, whom we are glad to welcome as a British subject, allowed us to reprint the speech she made on behalf of German Jewish women and children refugees. Her latest English film is *Stolen Life*.

RUDOLPH LIEBMANN is an Austrian journalist, aged 26. At one time he worked for *Die Neue Freie Presse*. After the Anschluss, he went on a lecturing tour in England, Scotland, and Wales, speaking about Austria and Czechoslovakia to educational bodies. He has since free-lanced for several London papers.

WILLY LEY was born in Berlin and lives in New York. He specializes in tracing the "development of legends that are of scientific character" and contributes to the magazine of the American Museum of Natural History.

IDRIS DAVIES is the author of the book of poems, *Gwalia Deserta*, published by Dent and reviewed in No. 13. He left elementary school at fourteen, to work in a coal-mine in Rhymney, South Wales, and worked seven years in the coal-face. After having been unemployed for some time, he is now a schoolmaster in London.

A. W. H. MACDONALD, one of our few Scottish contributors, is a sergeant and photographic instructor in the Royal Air Force at Angus, Montrose. His story, *Cornet Solo*, was printed in No. 10, and further information will be found in the current *News Reel*.

LORNA SLATER was born in 1909 on a farm in the Eastern Province of Cape Colony. "Educated at the Victoria High School and at Rhodes University College, both in Grahamstown in the Eastern Province." After graduating she taught for some years at various schools

for Native and European children. Finding the work uncongenial, she went to work as Investigator among the poor whites, natives, and coloured people in Korsten, a slum area near Port Elizabeth, and similar places. This work interested her deeply. But the salary was low and, "having no private means of her own, she was finally forced to give it up" and entered the Civil Service. She is now working in the Revenue Office at Port Elizabeth, and writing a novel in her spare time. Apart from stories and poems in her college magazine, she has not previously had any work published.

FRED URQUHART, born in 1912 in Edinburgh, published his first novel, *Time Will Knit*, in May, 1938. His stories have appeared in *The Fortnightly*, *Left Review*, *Fact*, *Penguin Parade*, *The London Mercury*, O'Brien's *Best Stories of 1938*, etc. He writes, "Have worked in four bookshops, in the G.P.O., and as a clerk. Now doing free-lance journalism with its attendant ills." He is also secretary for the Edinburgh branch of the Theatre Society of Scotland.

HERBERT HODGE, the author of two plays, *Where's That Bomb* and *Cannibal Carnival*, is also well known for his broadcasting (he was on the air to America during the September Crisis). His autobiography, *It's Draughty in Front*, was reviewed in No. 14. He is at present writing a book on his experiences as a London taxi-driver.

The following are previous contributors and last appeared in the number after their names: Frank Illingworth (No. 14), Humphrey Hare (No. 5), Merrill Moore (No. 14), William Justema (No. 12), George Barker (No. 11), Oscar Williams (No. 15), Kenneth Weston (No. 9).

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ROGER ★ DATALLER

== NELSON ==

NEWS REEL

ON THE SAME hoarding—a dramatic appeal for A.R.P. volunteers and a poster extolling the charms of Germany for winter sports. It happened in Bond Street. It could only happen in England.

* * *

GIFT HORSES

Barely over when this will be read, Christmas is not yet on us while it is written. But already we shiver in apprehension at the thought of some of the things which will be given and, presumably, received. There is for instance the “dainty glass ashtray, decorated at corner with spray of barbola flowers in leather” (suitable for singeing, we’d add). Similarly decorated, a “vase-filler” turns out to be a domesticated watering-can. Among the many mistakes for which *Snow White* is responsible is a whistling tooth-brush. Women can be, is the word titivated? with a make-up mirror to hang round the neck, a “keep fit” outfit of vest and trunks, or with a dressing-gown in leopard fur-cloth, having hood and “paw-mittens”. For men there has been devised a pipe-rack in the form of a palette, complete with brushes and realistic tube of paint; no explanation offered as to why a pipe-rack should look like a palette. There is also a cigarette-case made of a pound note,

set in silver. We asked why an artificial one wasn't used and were told that by the time such had been painted, enamelled and so on, it would cost more than a pound. The case, made of the real note, costs nine.

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A HINT IN TIME

We have lately seen so many books of the Victorian era, which make capital out of the extraordinary design and decoration of everyday objects in that era. A glance at the above and other "gifts" in our big stores would suggest that the cute collector will already begin marshalling his material for tastelessness in the twentieth century. Novelty has its uses and we ourselves are grateful to those who have, at various times, given us the electric-light pencil, the fountain shaving-brush, the key-tainer, which has a small torch to show us the keyhole, and the poker which is also bellows. But, looking back, there are always certain things which no one has given, and on consulting others in like position, we find they agree. We smile wanly when we hear the familiar "One never knows what to give a man", for there are certain simple things which it seems are never given. Can a man ever have enough shoe-laces, pipe-cleaners, toothpicks, ashtrays, dart flights? Has a man ever been given a screw-driver strong enough to use as a chisel, a hammer whose head does not fly off, a subscription to a taxi-rank, or straps for suitcases whose locks have gone (this is only ever discovered at the last moment)? Maps of places one hasn't been to are exciting, so are dictionaries of languages one might learn, and an A.B.C time-table is a luxury one doesn't buy for one's self.

Every householder knows that among the things of which you can never have enough are ink, sardine-tin openers that work, flower-pots, shelves, salt-cellars with permanently attached spoons, firelighters, electric-light bulbs, oranges that don't split when you play ball with them, blotting paper, and cups that can be used for soup, grapefruit, primroses, almonds or to keep studs and spare Yale keys in. These, like type-writing paper, are never given. Instead, numbers of people seem to spend most of the year inventing examples of misapplied ingenuity which are only seen at the end of it.

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INVENTOR WANTED

Yet the things for which there is need remain uninvented. We have two particularly in mind. One is an alibi-reminder, saying "Last Thursday, *told*—I was doing—". The other is an argument-saver. On the lines of the telephone-timepiece, TIM, you would dial TEM (for temper) and listen to a voice counting one hundred. By that time you and your collocutor would either be firm friends again, or the phone would be smashed. Either way, nothing but good could come from the invention.

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NOTE ON PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTORS

It is pleasant to be able to report that H. D. has been awarded the Helen Haire Levinson prize for two poems published in the June, 1938, issue of *Poetry* (U.S.A.). America has also noticed another contributor. Sergeant Macdonald, photographic instructor in the Royal

Air Force, writes: "I am half way through a novel arising out of the story of mine you published last year. It was spotted both by Harraps and Simon and Schuster, of New York." The story was *The Cornet* (No. 10). For a third contributor a separate paragraph seems demanded—as its contents will explain.

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FIFTY THOUSAND SONNETS

Merrill Moore has brought out a book called *1000 Autobiographical Sonnets*. The title is a bare description of fact. But that is not all. The latest count of his sonnets is fifty thousand. His publishers are able to state that "at the age of thirty-four, he has already written more sonnets than any other man who ever lived". That in itself is something to think about. Even more surprising is the fact that, to put it lightly, fifty thousand sonnets can't be wrong; in other words, mass-production has not spoiled the quality of Dr. Moore's work—as his poem, *Ego*, in the October issue, and *Bees* in this, will have shown.

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CIGARETTE CARDS IN LIGHTS

We once met a farmer who showed us two tiny rats in a match-box, and then a friend of ours used to have at his elbow a glass jar in which a brass band of tiny men constantly performed. We don't mean that we are in the same condition or being unkind to animals when we say that there are a lot of small and luminous athletes running across our mantelpiece all night. The little phosphorescent runners come from a new cigarette pack. We must apologize for shaving the husk of the

advertising world, but we feel sure that there are many whose lives will be brighter for phosphorescent cigarette cards. It doesn't seem fair to keep all the fun to ourselves, and, up to the last click of the typewriter, none of our friends had discovered them on his own. Anyone should be pleased, too, when the figures sway out of their background in the darkness and steal the mysterious blue fire of an animated Cocteau statuette. We remember how pleased we were when—to return to our bucolic days—we asked a Cornish waggoner what he had in his cart and he told us, "Some smallies and handies." We find these small and handy—nearly as handy as those other cigarettes which light themselves. They have a cotton-wool filter with a sulphur tip. You strike them on the side of the box, the wool smoulders and you don't need matches. For that reason, tobacco-nists don't seem keen on stocking them.

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PASSIONATE FOR PECKHAM

Some talk of Alexandria ; others of France, New York and the Orkneys, and not long ago there was a "Sussex" school of versifiers. As one of them said, "each to his choice," and W. S. Margrie rejoices that, "intended by Nature to be a Cockney Columbus," he has "a passionate desire to give the name of Peckham an immortal dignity". To that end, he founded, in 1930, the London Explorers' Club which has been "recognized by the B.B.C., the Ministry of Transport, *The Times*, Lyons, Selfridge's and other institutions". Now he has put out a record of its history, under the title of *Pickwicks of Peckham* (Watts, 7s. 6d.). It consists in part of reprints of reports from the *Evening Standard*, *Reynolds'*, *The Daily*

Express, etc. ; but the editor himself contributes much. His account of a visit to Hampton Court is characteristic :

" This was the first time I had been called ' Bill ' by a lady member. After I had had three cups of tea, Miss Mitchell said, ' Have another cup, Bill. ' It gave me quite a jolly little thrill. The human touch. "

Apart from this breeziness, there is much of charm concerning the Club's activities. " First we visit a place of interest, then we have tea and animated conversation, and afterwards we do some genuine exploring." Places explored have been the Abbey Folk Park, Barnet, the shop that provided the tea for the Boston tea-party, as well as shirt, banner, candle, watch, organ, and shuttlecock factories. Of this last, it is observed that, " In spite of mass-production, there is still a good deal of skilled craftsmanship in London. A certain amount of craftsmanship is involved in the manufacture of shuttlecocks. London produces shuttlecocks in huge quantities." Fifty thousand pounds'-worth of ostrich-feathers was a further sight inspected by members of the Club.

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GOOD CLEAN FUN

We ourselves feel, after reading this book, that one of the great attractions of the Club must be the members themselves. Who would not wish to meet a lady whose name, we are informed, really *is* Rose Cottage? The president, nicknamed " The Skipper ", is described as " a combination of electricity, petrol, ginger, and spice ". The vice-president has to be content with being a " live wire "—but he can discuss " heraldry, church architecture, old English inns and music-halls ".

Ex-Corporal Greenland's speciality is, on the other hand, sanitary science. A policeman contributes a poem, but we are not sure if he is a member ; the south London correspondent is both, and a mechanic by trade. There are " plenty of personalities on the women's side " . . . for instance, Mrs. Martin, who is called Elizabeth, " after Queen Bess," apparently because she is " queen of the tea-table ". We're not sure about that joke, but we can easily appreciate Miss Balzano. To ensure that others will, let us quote :—

" Miss Balzano has a pretty wit. We were discussing bald heads ; somebody wanted to know why men go bald and women don't. The Skipper : ' It is because men use their brains and women don't.' Miss Balzano : ' But you're not bald, Skipper.' Then everybody laughed, the Skipper as loudly as anybody."

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CATTERY

At Stud In London—King Kong. If that is alarming—and it's a genuine quotation from the catalogue—it is worth being really scared by the National Cat Club's Exhibition. You will have to go next year, because the last one has just purred for one day at the Paddington Baths. This is the first time we have attended, and such marrow as politics have left in our bones was melted by the Blue Persians. But one of the things which surprised us most was the lack of miaows. Well-bred cats, it seems, are above articulation. We saw black eyes like designs in sawdust, backs shaped on squares of velvet, and white cats sitting under tiny electric light bulbs in front of small pencils. But only the Siamese talk. Maybe some of the champions are confused by their publicity :

one label read " Matthew of Greingalles, always known as Merilla ". Perhaps the spectators put them off in spite of the folk that ourselves and the cats would expect—the people who say " Where is darling Jimjams ? " One wanted to buy a white cat, while his friend reminded him of the legend which sadly says that all white cats are deaf. " Well," said the other, " I'll buy a black, too, so that he can tell his friend what is going on." There was a cat with " no particulars at time of entry ", and that charmer tried to break all the rules and play with the shadow of the gentleman in the cage behind his own. True, there were some lovely Abyssians who looked as if they had prompted the printer to give a *list of exhibitors* and, in brackets, *the numbers refer to cats*. But the general impression was such that we were relieved when we met the common-or-guardian cat in the hall, the one who belonged to the Baths. He was not a cat who could have sat in the cages on the dais which obviously belonged to the committee of judges. He was not a cat who could have put outside his cage, as did the exhibitionists, notices to the milkman and the fishmonger. And to end on a note of hope, we made an abridgement from another advertisement in the catalogue : " Purring Cattery, Catford, S.E. 6. Genuine Cat Lovers can usually be met on price."

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THE ICE-CREAM MAN

The knife-grinder, the hurdy-gurdy player are rarely seen. Muffin men and chair-menders are becoming scarcer, and you can't buy hot potatoes in the streets this-a-day. But as one trade vanishes, another arrives and the old

hokey-pokey barrow trundles off, to be replaced by the itinerant ice-cream tricycle. We have had an opportunity of seeing the rules to which mobile ice-vendors must conform and for the benefit of readers who may never have thought of the matter, we give a few facts. The salesman is personally responsible for the tricycle and equipment issued to him. Unless he can satisfactorily explain any loss or damage, he pays for replacements at the rate of 3*s.* 6*d.* for a coat, 10*s.* for a mackintosh, 1*d.* for a button, 2*s.* for a bell and for a lamp. For repairs to a tricycle, necessitated by any negligence on his part, he must pay; but an estimate is given before the work is put in hand. Salesmen must turn up at their depots shaved, with clean and tidy clothes, and must clean their tricycles thoroughly, both body-work and brass-work. Failure to do so means that they will "most probably not be sent out that day". "Whatever the weather, a salesman must report at his depot at the time arranged by his Manager." "He will not leave his round before 8 p.m., unless instructed by his manager." One hour is allowed for dinner and half an hour for tea, "the times to be arranged by the Manager." It seems to us that it must be worth keeping in with the Manager. We don't know what rules govern him, but a mere salesman's terms of engagement include duty on Sundays. He is paid weekly. One day's notice is given and expected.

AN APPEAL

*(for the Women's Appeal Committee in Aid of German
and Austrian Jewish Women and Children)*

By ELISABETH BERGNER

THE CAUSE THAT unites us to-day is not a matter of charity. It is based not only on sympathy, pity, or humanity ; but it is, for all who live to-day, a matter of self-defence and self-preservation.

Human imagination is a poor thing ; and however much we are told, we, in this noble country, cannot possibly visualize this frenzy of brutality, this wave of lowest perversity, of hatred, of lies and degradation, that mounts higher and higher every day and threatens to encompass the earth, unless it is stemmed by united determination.

This, however, is the battle of the whole world ; our share in it is a comparatively small, but particularly grim, one. While other peoples have to defend their lands, we have to *find*, to *provide*, *actually to buy* land for our people.

We all know how dangerous evil is in its infectious spread and in its cheap temptation ; therefore we have to prove, to demonstrate visibly, that the good alone stands, is the Genius of life ; and the only prevailing force.

We do not choose to diminish our strength by returning hate for hate, abuse for abuse, humiliation for humiliation. We have a mission to fulfil ! And this fulfilment will be our strongest weapon, our resistance, and *in the end our only answer*.

Our readiness to help, to sacrifice, to contribute

immediately and generously—with all our strength and means—will be the great proof, that we are the stronger in this battle and that we have a right to survive it.

History reveals ruthlessly the true face of an Epoch ; and the face of this our Epoch will be a distorted and ugly one, if we, in this great hour of need, do not give to it the redeeming beauty of love and faith. And in this task, every person alive, regardless of creed or race, is fully and equally responsible before God.

BUT IT IS FOR THE JEWS THEMSELVES TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SACRIFICING.

I know that a great deal is being done. I have just heard from our President what has been achieved, and I would like to say how deeply I admire the work the Women's Appeal Committee for German and Austrian Jewish Women and Children has accomplished ; and also how honoured I am to belong to it.

But, alas, our task is an unending one ; and we must strive again and again to raise our funds—on a scale larger than ever before. For, we need millions !

A little while ago, some of you must have read in the newspapers of the very touching gift of a poor little East End tailor to the Lord Mayor's Fund. He gave his only possession, a gold wedding-ring. The ring of his dead wife. This golden contribution was auctioned and fetched four hundred and fifty pounds. The Lord Mayor returned the ring to the donor whom he called a gallant gentleman.

To-day, I pray that this beautiful and sincere gesture of the unknown little man may inspire and guide us all how to give, give—and give again. By doing so you will be offering an immense contribution towards the rescue work that must be accomplished, immediately

and without delay. Every day we lose, means thousands of lives more destroyed ! Every hour we gain, means thousands of lives saved.

I can say no more, but in the name of our prostrate brethren—thank you, for what you are going to do.

AND THE POCKET STATES?

By FRANK ILLINGWORTH

WHAT IS THE position of Europe's pocket states in the diplomatic ferment of to-day? Will the present urge towards nationalism bring the minute monarchies and republics within the borders of their larger sisters? Except in the case of Luxembourg the frontiers of the pocket states have long been respected, but their very minuteness, which has given that measure of protection for so long, can no longer be taken as a guarantee of immunity from Europe's present urge to incorporate all peoples of the same stock within one state by the extension of frontiers.

There is little doubt that the Third Reich has its eye upon Liechtenstein. The population of this tiny principality, wedged between Austro-Germany and Switzerland, is mostly Germanic in origin and as such it has need to fear the ever-roving eye of the Nazis. But it does not want to be Germanized. Prince Franz Josef echoed the opinion of his people when he said recently that Liechtenstein must remain independent.

With no army to maintain—indeed the little country has but one soldier, a bearded veteran of ninety-five and the pride of the people—this pocket principality need levy no income-tax. For years a considerable profit resulted from selling Liechtenstein citizenship to suitable foreign refugees, many of whom are Jews from Germany. The people are, on the whole, happy and well-off. Their state, which covers sixty-five square miles of territory, was founded in 1719. After it was incorporated in the Rhine Confederation, it was in the German

Confederation. But for the last seventy-two years it has been independent. Can it hope to remain so ?

Liechtenstein is not alone in her fear of absorption by powerful neighbours. Monaco looks to France for protection ; Andorra turns anxious eyes towards Franco's Spain ; the germs of fascism seep into San Marino ; Luxembourg casts fearful glances towards Germany.

Had the Great War ended to a different tune, Luxembourg would have lost her independence. Two hundred and eighty thousand intensely patriotic people would have found themselves under the iron heel of the Kaiser, regimented, taxed, a minority. As it was, in 1919 she elected to remain a Duchy under the Grand Duchess Charlotte.

Once before the powers came to her rescue : when the London Conference of Powers decided that German troops must leave the Grand Duchy. But, can the previous action of the Western Powers be taken as a precedent ? It is not to her army, two hundred and thirty officers and men armed with pre-War Mausers, that Luxembourg looks for her safety, but to her position as a "buffer state" between Germany, France, and Belgium. The question the Duchy asks is : will the Powers adopt their previous firm attitude if the Nazis decide overnight that little Luxembourg should become a German state ?

When in the Duchy, I came to the conclusion that the German (war-time) "occupation", based on the invader's assumption that Luxembourg's railway system could be used to Germany's detriment and should therefore be supervised, was still far too fresh in the minds of the people for them to submit timidly to annexation.

They know they have everything to lose by becoming a part of Germany. The Duchy is wealthy. Unemployment is low. The people are happy. To them, incorporation of their beautiful country within the German Reich would mean three things: the hated conscription; heavy taxation; loss of "self-determination", to say nothing of the many pin-pricks a free people would feel in a totalitarian state.

But can they rely upon any other country to help them should the shadow of Germany fall across their land? The time will come when the attitude of the Democracies will show itself, and on their action Luxembourg sinks or swims.

The position of Andorra is little less enviable. Its five thousand inhabitants, spread over one hundred and ninety-one square miles of the Pyrenees, have for long years basked in the security offered by France and the Bishop of Spanish Urgel. For centuries, the "squires" of Andorra's six departments have elected the twenty-five members of the General Council (backed up by the only armed force in the country, seven policemen). This in turn has elected the President, often as not a farmer who, even during his Presidency, can be found working in the fields.

The people are hard-working, poor perforce, but on the whole contented, and, from all accounts, with pro-Government feelings for Spain.

Annually, the Bishop of Spanish Urgel receives from Andorra a due amounting to ten pounds and a salary of ten pounds augmented with a gift of a dozen cheeses, a dozen chickens, and half that number of hams; while France accepts the sum of twenty-five pounds annually with a yearly salary of seven pounds for her President.

But the "neutrality" of Andorra is worth vastly more to France than this paltry sum.

At the moment, General Franco's forces are near Andorra's frontier, and France, ever mindful of the passes between herself and Insurgent Lerida, is watching the situation closely. It is doubtful whether she would permit a Franco-German state to dominate those passes by annexing Andorra. To this the pocket state pins her faith, for she prefers, to fascism or nazi-ism, her six hundred and sixty years of feudalism to continue.

Europe's two other pocket states, Monaco and San Marino, enjoy a less strained degree of tension. The latter state, covering only thirty-two square miles of Italy's northern mountains, is the smallest Republic in the world. Not many years ago San Marino titles could be purchased by worthy foreigners, but this method of helping to balance the budget has been dropped in favour of issuing many different sets of stamps for foreign collectors ; there is also a growing tourist trade.

San Marino, governed by two Captains Regent, has always been considered Europe's comic-opera State. But the San Marinese take themselves seriously. Fascism has infected the people in a mild way. Of all pocket states, San Marino has probably enjoyed the greatest degree of immunity from invasion. Even Napoleon respected its independence. During the Great War the little Republic was pro-Italian, voted a sum of money to Italy, and, according to the Germans, carried on an anti-German wireless campaign which included spying activities !

Until recently Monaco served no other purpose than as playground for the rich. Now, there are reports that the Principality is a hot-bed of Italian spying and

the headquarters of either pro or anti-Government Spain societies.

Though the smallest Monarchy, or more correctly, Principality, in the world, it is by far the richest. The profits from the Casino pay for the upkeep of the "Kingdom." Italy wants the Principality.

In the event of hostilities, it has chosen to entrust itself to France. As such, Monaco is one of the only two pocket states to know its true position. San Marino is the other. The situation of Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, and Andorra is a reminder to us that the smallness and harmlessness of these vivid, happy pocket states is not necessarily a safeguard against aggression by their powerful neighbours.

POLAND, 1938

By RUDOLPH LIEBMANN

THE AVERAGE BRITON knows nothing, or practically nothing about Poland, its people, its products, its history, geography and political situation.

Yet Poland may be in the news very soon, and probably the story will be similar to that of some other countries in Central or Eastern Europe, such as Austria or Czechoslovakia. One morning the world may wake up to find that Poland has again disappeared from the map. And that will be the more tragic as to-day many people hardly know how it got there.

It takes an Englishman about twenty years to hear of a new country, another twenty years to become interested in it, and yet another twenty years to go there and find out for himself. But perhaps this is partly the fault of those new countries that have not yet realized that the English want to be told about things and cannot be bothered to maintain an expensive inquiry service nor a Ministry of Propaganda to keep them informed and to hammer home the facts.

Poland is rather an extraordinary place. It might perhaps be compared with those rivers in Dalmatia that at certain points vanish from sight beneath the ground. Later, at a far distant place, they turn up again, much changed, seeming to be wider and to flow more strongly.

Like these rivers, Poland, in 1795, disappeared from the map of Europe, as did Austria recently, and was not heard of again until the Great War. Then the Poles, like many other peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, thought the moment had come for them to walk out on their former ally.

In 1795 Poland was shared between three countries : Russia, under the clever guidance of Catherine the Great, managed to obtain the largest part, with Warsaw the capital ; Prussia, under Frederick the Great, seized Pomerania and Posen ; whilst Austria as usual had to be content with the remainder, Galicia and the Ukraine, which was certainly not the best. Galicia in those days, apart from its ancient and beautiful capital of Cracow, consisted of moorland and mines. It supplied Austria with coal, iron of a minor quality and salt ; and the thousands of Jews who were recently sent back during the Nazi pogroms.

But Poland, although divided, was not dead. The Activists and Passivists were hard at work all the time. The Activists loudly proclaimed the misery of Poland, which lay in fetters. Occasionally, when a Czar or an Austrian Archduke paid them a short visit, they emphasized the subject by dropping an incendiary bomb.

The Passivists' method was passive resistance and quiet suffering, and has no doubt inspired Mahatma Gandhi. They let themselves be deported to Siberia, where they died reciting some beautiful poetry by Sienkiewicz or another national poet. Somehow these quiet sufferers made a deeper impression than their hooligan brothers, for the world really listened to their complaints and in 1919 Poland was actually restored to more than its original size.

But the young state, unlike some of the more fortunate newly-constituted nations, had to cope with considerable difficulties before the Polish eagle could spread his wings and " rise like a Phoenix from the ashes " as sentimental Poles used to declaim.

To begin with the new state had a common frontier with Russia that was more than a thousand miles long. Until 1931 heavy fighting continued between the Soviet Union and the guards of Marshal Pilsudski, Poland's liberator. Pilsudski had himself mapped out a new Ukrainian state that was to be ruled by Hetman Petlura, Lenin's predecessor in the Russian revolution. The capital was to be Kiev and the plan had President Wilson's approval. But when the Bolsheviks came to power Poland dropped this plan and annexed one-fifth of the territory she had already ceded. The rest of the Ukraine was declared an independent province within the U.S.S.R.

Poland's relations with Germany also were not too happy. Owing to the creation of the Polish corridor, Poland, from the very beginning of its independence, had a considerable German minority in its Pomeranian and Silesian districts. The foundation of the Danzig Free State, which actually became a Polish harbour, did not improve matters. For almost sixteen years dispute followed dispute over the lawful ownership of that corridor which, while it enabled Poland to become a sea power and a commercially independent state, cut off East Prussia from the rest of Germany. It was not until 26th January, 1934, that some appeasement was brought about by the signing of a ten years' treaty at Berlin guaranteeing the corridor, and at the same time stipulating a pact of non-aggression between Germany and her eastern neighbour.

Since this pact, Poland's relations with France have never been the same. And Goering's visits to Marshal Pilsudski, the shooting parties given in his honour by President Moscicki and the Prime Minister seemed to

break up a friendship which had lasted for nearly a hundred years. Ever since the French revolution Polish refugees had found a home in France and warm understanding for their plans for a "Polonia restituta". Schneider Le Creuzot possess big foundries and armament factories on the western border near Teschen, which has now been annexed from Czechoslovakia.

Relations between the latter country and Poland were never very good. Although both peoples are Slavonic, the Czechs and Poles have very little in common. The Czechs, as long as they were independent, were of a definitely leftish tendency, and since their two great protectors, Russia and France, were pursuing the same policy, this was no doubt a wise move. But the Poles are more old-fashioned and feudal in their outlook. Their territorial reform is still in its infancy and is violently opposed by the government party. By contrast, during Czechoslovakia's first years all the big landowners were disowned and their land distributed to small farmers, who before the War were nothing more than better class serfs. The Czechs, who seemed to enjoy the position of France's "most favoured nation", for strategic reasons took Teschen away from Poland and it has only recently been restored.

The present situation is still less in Poland's favour. The big plan of a common frontier with Hungary was rebuffed most rudely by General Goering, and for the first time the Polish Eagle has had a painful awakening from a dream of a fool's paradise. Germany cannot allow Poland and Hungary to form a sort of Warsaw-Budapest axis, however much this might be desired by the former partner of the Rome-Protocols. She must pursue her

policy of linking up Roumania through her new Czech vassal state, though at present the cost is only a new Reichs-Autobahn through Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia. If, however, Ruthenia once again became Hungarian territory, the traffic axis might change to a north-south direction and Roumania would seem once more to be farther away than ever.

But Germany and Poland are bound to come to blows in the near future over yet another point. This will be Lithuania. Germany seems to have chosen this small, half-German Baltic republic for her next victim, and if Dr. Neumann, the Memel Henlein, is successful we may soon see the Swastika hoisted in Kovno. Once in Lithuania, Germany will remember that the other half of Lithuania is still occupied by Poland and that actually the old capital, Vilna, has never been evacuated by Polish troops. But Poland had a very good reason for occupying Vilna in 1925. For if Lithuania really became German, Poland would see herself surrounded by Germany on three sides, and her situation would more and more resemble that of Czechoslovakia before the Sudeten trouble began.

On Poland's fourth frontier are Russia and Roumania. They are not too friendly. If Germany succeeds in strengthening her influence in Roumania, Hitler is sure to bring up his old scheme of a German domination in the Ukraine. There are twice as many German-speaking people in the Ukraine as in Sudetenland. They are mostly Jews or of Jewish extraction, but once the region is annexed, Germany can quickly get rid of the Jews and send colonizers there.

Thus, quite apart from her internal political struggle over election reforms, land reform problems and other

troubles, Poland's future looks rather gloomy. France, being occupied with other matters, will probably not be able to do much more for her than she did for Czechoslovakia. German trade penetration is making itself more and more felt every day, and the same methods are being applied by Germany's agents in Poland as have proved so successful in the Balkans. Great quantities of agricultural produce, timber, iron, and steel are bought on the famous credit scheme, and if Poland wishes to get payment at all she is compelled to buy worthless luxuries or inferior quality goods, for which she must pay through the nose.

Endeavours have been made to increase trade with England and Sweden. Poland has just ordered thirty new trawlers to increase the traffic between England and the Polish port of Gdynia. Orders for English machinery, tools, electrical appliances, and cutlery have rapidly increased of late, but this has never been brought to the knowledge of the British public.

To the average Englishman, Poland remains a semi-Fascist power, willy-nilly caught in the German trade net and well out of the way. It will be the task of the Polish Eagle to attract attention to his clipped wings if he does not wish to disappear altogether.

THE LEGEND OF THE UNICORN

By WILLY LEY

THE STORY OF the Unicorn, the most important and at any event the most glamorous of all non-existing fabulous beasts, begins with a classical error.

The famous Seventy that were to translate the Script from Hebrew into Greek, thus producing what became known later as the Septuagint, suddenly discovered an unknown animal in certain passages of the Old Testament. The Hebrew seers spoke about an animal they called with some awe by the name of *Re'em*.

It was not stated what size this animal *Re'em* assumed nor was there a description in solid zoölogical terms. Not even a comparison with another known animal was made. All that could be gathered was that this animal *Re'em* must have been—or still was—fierce and fleet and unmanageable in every respect. It is not reported how long the Seventy hesitated before they decided upon a Greek term, but finally, maybe under the spell of dim recollections of half-obscure rumours that were pretty indistinct in themselves, they substituted for *Re'em* the word *monókeros*, i.e. Unicorn. Later translators of the Bible, following the Septuagint, had no choice but to translate *monókeros* into their respective languages, the Vulgate said *unicornus*, the French Bible *licorne*, and Martinus Luther wrote *Einhorn*, all meaning the same as unicorn, namely one or single-horned.

Thus the unicorn invaded the Bible and Job xxxix, 9–12 still reads :—

“ Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib ?

Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow ?
or will he harrow the valleys after thee ?

Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?"

This translation, possibly a mere blunder on the part of the Seventy that were not very strong in zoölogy and allied sciences, has been called the "main jewel of a watch, holding the intricate structure together". While this comparison might excite some new arguments on the part of watchmakers it is true that the legend of the unicorn, had the name not been mentioned in the Bible, would have been much more short-lived than it actually was.

The passage quoted from the Book of Job is not the only one in the Bible where the animal Re'em appears; there are seven altogether, three of them in the Psalms.

The first question asked nowadays naturally concerns the zoölogical identity of the Re'em. For a time this animal was identified (by Samuel Bochart and his followers) with the oryx antelope. One reason for this conjecture was the fact that the Arabs call the oryx *rîm*; the other was that the oryx was once proverbial for a formidable enemy both to human beings and to other animals. But this logic, sound as it seemed, collapsed when an animal *rimu* was discovered in Assyrian inscriptions. Fortunately, pictures accompanied these texts and new guesswork could thus be avoided in translating them. The pictures showed unmistakably an animal that was already well known to zoölogists, although they had it on their list of animals that became extinct during historical times. It was the wild ox or urus, *Bos primigenius* in the zoölogical catalogues, the largest and most formidable

wild ox that ever existed. Roman authors had later described it as a speciality of the "Stygian Forests" of ancient Germany and likened it in size and strength to the elephant.

Bos primigenius—not to be confused with the European wisent that resembles the American bison—was living all over Europe and Asia Minor in the days when the books of the Old Testament were written, but while it became extinct in Asia Minor in early historical times it continued to live in Germany and Poland even until after the War of Thirty Years. The last urus, an old cow, is reported to have died in Poland in 1627. Some of the authors that knew the urus as a live animal described it as almost seven feet high and about twelve feet long . . . the rhetorical questions in the Book of Job become very understandable if one knows these facts.

There is no longer any doubt that Re'em and rimu and urus are the same animal, but it is mildly amusing that it was just this "awful beast" that is the most important ancestor of domestic cattle and not the much smaller wisent. The Re'em was finally made to abide in man's crib, to bring home his seed and to gather it into his barn.

The Re'em of the Bible identified, it remains to trace the second part of the blunder of the Seventy. What was the *monókeros* they substituted for Re'em?

It is here that the story of the unicorn really begins.

It made its first appearance in Persia, in the writings of Ktesias, body physician of the Persian king Artaxerxes II. Ktesias, who returned from Persia in about 400 B.C., wrote, while residing at Cnidus, two works. One of them was a History of Persia, originally

in twenty-three books, but now lost with the exception of a few small parts. The other work concerned India, and part of it is still known in the form of a condensed abstract made not less than thirteen hundred years later by one Photius, then Patriarch of Constantinople.

“There are in India,” the abstract reads, “certain wild asses that are as large as horses, and larger. Their bodies are white, their heads dark red, and their eyes dark blue. They have a horn on the forehead which is about a foot and a half in length. The dust filed from this horn is administered in a potion as a protection against deadly drugs. The base of the horn, for some two hands’ breadth above the brow, is pure white; the upper part is sharp and of a vivid crimson; and the remainder, the middle portion, is black. Those who drink out of these horns, made into drinking vessels, are not subject, they say, to convulsions or to the Holy Disease [epilepsy]. Indeed, they are immune even to poisons if, either before or after swallowing such, they drink wine, water, or anything else from these beakers. . . .”

This report, a seed of a few lines that grew into a library of hundreds of volumes, needs a few words of explanation. Ktesias, when writing about India, wrote about a country he had never seen for himself. If the parts preserved by Photius are a fair sample of the original, his book was a compilation of hearsay, a description based on the tales of travellers and it probably bore no stronger resemblance to its subject than does an American movie to everyday American life.

It is fairly easy to see that the “wild ass of India” in Ktesias’ book is based on the Indian rhinoceros, with admixtures of features of some other animal. That there “is much rhinoceros in it” can be asserted without lengthy discussion. Not only is the rhinoceros the only truly one-horned animal, but it has also other features that agree with Ktesias’ story. For example,

he mentioned somewhere else that his animal is swift of foot and that its speed increases whilst running. This applies to the rhinoceros. It also corresponds with facts of rhinoceros-lore that the horn was said to be of pharmaceutical value. Rhinoceros horn was, and still is, considered a powerful drug in the Far East, and wealthy and elderly Chinese literally pay its weight in gold because they hope to regain their manhood by taking pulverized rhinoceros horn internally. Beakers of rhinoceros horn were many, even in ancient times. And some of them were adorned with the three colours Ktesias described as the natural colours of the horn. It is probable that there was some mystic value attached to this colour scheme although now we do not know which or why. Those features of Ktesias' "wild ass" that are not traceable to the rhinoceros probably came from an antelope of some sort. The "Blackbuck" of the English suggests itself and it is an odd coincidence that the natives of the countries where these antelopes abound still claim that there are many one-horned freaks among them.

And while the word "antelope" reminds one of the *rîm* (oryx), another school of thought, led by the German Professor Schrader, cited Ktesias as a witness that the origin of the unicorn legend is no other animal than the *Re'em*. Professor Schrader pointed out that Assyrian and Babylonian bas-reliefs show the *urus* in very strict profile, so strict, in fact, that only one horn is visible. Doctor Othenio Abel of Vienna and Professor O. Antonius strengthened Professor Schrader's arguments in calling attention to the fact that these famous bas-reliefs—aside from being somewhat heraldic in design—are not absolutely accurate in detail. Although

there is no mistaking the general appearance of the urus, small details are either missing or wrong, because the artists had no live models at their disposal any more. The bas-reliefs date from the time of King Nabuchodonossor (around 600 B.C.), when the urus was already extinct in Mesopotamia for about a century. When the Persians saw these bas-reliefs and copied them on the walls of the Royal Palace of Persepolis the urus was already a somewhat fabulous monster. Its size, strength, and fierceness made it particularly apt to become a mythical animal within a short period of time. When Ktesias the Greek came to Persia and saw the Persian copies of this animal he had never heard of before there was in all probability a sufficient supply of fables on hand and waiting to be related to travelling foreigners. It can also be safely assumed that Ktesias was only superficially acquainted with the languages he heard in Persepolis spoken around him. Being a Greek he was, if one may trust the judgment of Roman authors : " a bad linguist, a bad naturalist, and a liar."

But in spite of all this, I do not think that Ktesias was noticeably influenced by the Persian reliefs. The next important sources of the unicorn legend after Ktesias point another way. These sources are the Roman Aelian, who wrote in Greek although he lived in Italy, and that very famous grouchy old colonel of the Imperial Roman Cavalry who is known as Pliny the Elder.

Aelian spoke of inaccessible mountains in the interior of India and of the strange beasts that could be found there. Among them, he said, " is the unicorn which they call *cartàzonos*. This animal is as large as a full-grown horse, it has a mane, tawny hair, feet like an elephant, and a tail like a goat. It is exceedingly swift."

At first glance descriptions of this kind seem to be merely *caprices zoologiques*, and the unicorn is growing more and more phantastic. Actually Aelian only tried to describe the rhinoceros, its heavy feet, its small tail, and its other characteristics. The name *cartàzonos* is probably a Greek corruption of the Sanscrit word *kartàjan*, Lord of the Desert, or better: Lord of the Wilderness.

Pliny, with his sense for military precision, came still closer to the original when he wrote:—

“The Orsaeen Indians hunt an exceedingly wild beast called monoceros, which has a stag’s head, elephant’s feet, and a boar’s tail. The rest of the body is like that of a horse. It makes a deep lowing noise, and one black horn two cubits long projects from the middle of its forehead. This animal, they say, cannot be taken alive.”

We are apt to smile nowadays when we read this description. But compared word for word with a good photograph of an Indian rhinoceros, it is not at all bad. It is the words chosen that make us smile, the facts are not so wrong.

The climax of all unicorn descriptions was reached by Julius Solinus in his *Polyhistoria*. The Roman found a worthy translator in Arthur Golding (1587) who wrote:—

“But the cruellest is the Unicorne, a monster that belloweth horriblie, bodyed like a horse, footed like an Elyphant, tayled like a Swyne, and headed like a Stagge. His horne sticketh out of the midds of hys forehead of a wonderful brightness about foure foote long, so sharp, that whatsoever he pusheth at, he striketh it through easily. He is never caught alive; kyllled he may be, but taken he cannot bee.”¹

¹ It is impossible to resist the temptation to quote this passage in its original language:—

“*Atrocissimum est Monoceros, monstrum mugitu horrendo, equino corpore,*

Doctor Odell Shepard, who traced the literary history of the unicorn in a delightful manner in his book, *The Lore of the Unicorn*, remarked, referring to this passage: "Whatever rhetoric can do to make the unicorn impressive Solinus has done." And, one may add, Golding did everything to preserve the flavour of the original Latin thunder.

Soon after Solinus, the history of the unicorn "goes wild". The Semitic literature delighted in exaggerating its size to impossible dimensions. The Arabs told that the unicorn loved to pierce elephants with its horn (—later, in Medieval Europe, the story made its reappearance, sometimes about the unicorn, sometimes about the rhinoceros—), but that it never succeeded in shaking the carcass from its horn. Thus, after three or four dead elephants had accumulated on its horn, the unicorn lost its mobility and fell prey to the Roc. The Jews competed with the Arabs in unicorn-tales worthy of Baron von Munchausen or Paul Bunyan and quoted the Talmud about its size, that was so incredible that Noah could not find any room for it in the Ark. So it had to swim for the entire length of the Flood and could only occasionally rest the tip of its horn.

Christian mythology slowly evolved the fantasy of the unicorn being a slave to virgins. According to ancient tradition it could not be captured, but the new Christian legend found an exception. Yes, it could be captured, but not by a man. A virgin must go into the woods where the unicorn roams and wait there patiently.

elephanti pedibus, cauda suilla, capite cervino, cornu e media fronte protrahitur splendore mirifico ad longitudinem pedum quatuor, ita tamen, ut quidquid impetat, facile ictu ejus perforetur. Vivus non venit in hominum potestatem, et interimi quidem potest, capi non potest."

Then, after a little while, the unicorn would come and put its horn into the lap of the virgin and fall asleep. The hunters who had hidden themselves on trees would then come and take the royal beast prisoner. This Christian myth has, strangely enough, baffled learned commentators for centuries and the more learned and more bigot was the commentator, the more he was baffled. Actually the explanation is very simple, one only has to know that the unicorn had acquired meanwhile the reputation of being the symbol of Royal power, which happens to be exactly the same as manly power.

But even while this legend was still being told the lore of the unicorn had followed another trend;—a trend that centred no longer upon the animal itself but upon its horn, called “alicorn”. From the days of Ktesias it had been believed to be a powerful antidote against any kind of poison, whether poisoning was acquired accidentally or as a result of a carefully planned crime. Naturally many people, especially those in power, liked to possess the antidote, one could never tell in those times. Equally naturally its price climbed according to the demand, soon the famous mark “weight for weight, alicorn for gold” was reached. And still more naturally alicorn was faked.

Rhinoceros-horn might be called “true” alicorn although it did not possess any of the qualities it supposedly harboured. But there were also horns of blackbucks and other antelopes on the market. In Northern Europe *unicornum verum* and *unicornum falsum* were strictly distinguished. The former “true alicorn” was usually found in the earth—mammoth tusks—while the latter, false alicorn, came in quantities

from the North, tusks of the narwhale, a marine mammal.

During the Renaissance, a few open-minded Italians were the first to attack the supposed medical value of alicorn. They fought against every pharmacist in the world who had one chained to the counter in his store. Every apothecary was very proud of his alicorn, not too proud, of course, to refuse a profitable sale. The popular belief was still strong. If a wealthy patient died in spite of all the efforts of a good physician who was too honest to prescribe alicorn, the surviving relatives made life uncomfortable for the physician, especially if they inherited less than they had expected. Even Konrad Gesner von Zürich, the famous "father of zoölogy", could not help but prescribe alicorn if his patients insisted; but he recorded that he had never failed to prescribe other medicine simultaneously. It took very long until alicorn finally disappeared from the stock lists of pharmacies; the last of the "must" list issued for London pharmacies that contains alicorn was printed in 1741.

All this time the belief in the animal had slowly faded, even those who defended alicorn for its medical value (and for their profit) conceded that the animal from which those horns came might be almost or even completely extinct. One can almost see an old apothecary tell his customer with a sorrowful face that the extinction of mankind might soon be expected since the unicorn had become extinct and therefore no new supply of alicorn could grow any more. Fortunately he still had one, but, of course, he was now more reluctant to part with it than ever before.

The scientific death-blow for the unicorn—as far

as the scientific world was concerned—fell in 1827 when the great Georges Cuvier declared that a single-horned animal with a cloven hoof must be impossible, because such animal must have a divided frontal bone and no horn could possibly grow upon the division.

Thus the story of the unicorn found its sudden end.

But there are two more things to be related.

One concerns a possibility, the other a very surprising experiment.

Around the year 1900 paleontologists believed that they had successfully discovered the original unicorn. In Russia and in Siberia bones and skulls of an extinct distant relative of the rhinoceros were discovered. This animal, *Elasmotherium sibiricum*, seemed to resemble the ancient reports even more than the living rhinoceros. It was noticeably larger than the largest Indian rhinoceros, its horn was much longer than that of the rhinoceros, and it was actually situated in the middle of the forehead of the animal. But after the first excitement had subsided most scientists abandoned the idea that *Elasmotherium* had anything to do with the unicorn-legend. "However"—quoting from Melchior Neumayrs' *Erdgeschichte*—"it is possible that in Siberia Man and *Elasmotherium* actually lived together and that *Elasmotherium* was exterminated by man; at least one may explain that way ancient songs of the Tunguses that formerly there lived in their country a kind of terrible black oxen with only one horn in the middle of the forehead and of gigantic size, so large that an entire sled was needed alone for the transportation of one horn."

And in March, 1933, an American biologist, Dr. W. Franklin Dove of Maine University, performed a simple operation on a day-old male Ayrshire calf.

This operation looks as if it were, but it actually was *not*, as I know from correspondence with Dr. Dove, the direct result of his study of Odell Shepard's unicorn work. Doctor Shepard related in his book that unicorned sheep exist in Nepal and on occasion are even sent to Europe. It is known that these unicorned sheep are being produced artificially, but method and reason for such treatment are not known. There are also reports that the Kafirs sometimes produce unicorned cattle and the Dinkas in Africa are also said "not only to manipulate the horns of their cattle as the Kafirs do but to use this practice as a means of marking the leaders of their herds".

"It seems possible, therefore," continued Dr. Shepard, "that what I may call the unicorn-idea, the notion that one-horned animals exist in nature, arose from the custom of uniting the horns of various domestic animals by a process which is still in use but still mysterious to the civilized world. Here may be the explanation of the one-horned cows and bulls that Aelian says were to be found in Ethiopia and of the unicorned cattle reported by Pliny as living in the land of the Moors. The cows with single horns bending backward and a span long seen by Vartoman at Zeila in Ethiopia may have been of this sort. The one-horned ram's head sent to Pericles by his farm hands may have been that of the leader of their flock, and so a perfect symbol of that leadership in Athens which, according to Plutarch's interpretation, they wished to prophesy for their master. Finally, the mysterious one-horned ox mentioned three times over in the Talmud as Adam's sacrifice to Jehovah may have been the most precious thing that Adam possessed, the leader of his herd of cattle."

Dr. Dove did not know this when he planned his operation. But he had the suspicion that "the separation of the frontal bones at the point of origin of the horns precludes the existence of the unicorn" may be unfounded. His experiment actually established that Cuvier's notion *is* unfounded. The bony horn cores are *not* outgrowths of the frontal bones, as Cuvier had believed, they are formed from horn buds that originate in the soft tissue covering the frontal bones. In other words, the bony horn cores do not grow, as we know now, *from* the skull but *upon* the skull and do not fuse with the frontal bones until a certain state of development is attained.

Anatomical conditions being thus, it is, of course, possible to transplant the horn buds. The operation performed by Dr. Dove did just that, it consisted of cutting the two horn buds, trimming them flat at their point of contact, and placing them together over the "seam" of the frontal bones. It was expected that they would grow into a single horn spike, sheathed by a single horn and that this horn would grow to the skull of the animal in exactly the place always reported as the point from which the horn of the unicorn grew.

The experiment was a complete success. In some respects it was even more successful than anyone had dared to dream. Ordinarily this race of cattle has curved horns, the horn of the artificial unicorn grew perfectly straight, only near its tip it curves slightly upwards. The single horn that covers the single bony spike (which is solidly attached to the frontal bones in spite of the suture) is greyish-white at the base and tipped with black. If the calf had been a female the horn would be tipped with red, according to Dr. Dove, exactly

the colours of the ancient descriptions that were so puzzling to later commentators.

The most surprising result, however, is the behaviour of this animal. As Dr. Dove wrote: "True in spirit as in horn to his prototype, he is conscious of peculiar power. Although he is an animal with the hereditary potentialities for two horns, he recognizes the power of a single horn which he uses as a prow to pass under fences and barriers in his path, or as a forward thrusting bayonet in his attacks. And, to invert the beatitude, his ability to inherit the earth gives him the virtues of meekness. Consciousness of power makes him docile."

If these sentences were not written in modern English, but in Latin, and if they were not printed in a modern scientific journal of the year 1936, but in a book of about the year 1550, one would probably select them as the shortest and most typical of all the descriptions of the fabulous monster.

These ancient descriptions usually fit the rhinoceros better than an unicorned ox. But at the same time the ancient authors are often emphatic in asserting that unicorn and rhinoceros are not the same. That they afterwards proceed to describe the one in terms fitting only the other is funny, but excusable. One may think that there have always been families that knew and practised the secret of producing unicorns. One may also amuse one's self in trying to imagine the fanciful tales about long and most perilous voyages invented and told to conceal the real origin of the highly priced animals. In short, one knows the whole story of the unicorn if one knows the possibility of producing unicorned oxen by a simple operation and if one remembers that the single horn is not only the symbol

of the leader of the herd but actually *makes* the leader of the herd.

There is only one question left open for discussion. Do we have a reason to assume that the ancients, the Kafirs, the Dinkas, and the natives of Nepal knew and know how to perform this operation and that they have the ability to perform it? It could be argued that single-horned domestic animals are known to have been produced sometimes by these people and that the operation itself is simple. But there is not even a reason for any argument because Pliny gave the recipe for the operation. In the eleventh book of his *Natural History* one may read in the course of the discussion of the horns of oxen: "incisions are twisted in several directions so that four horns sprout on the head." Though this concerns multi-horned animals it applies to unicorns as well. Possibly Pliny did not know this. Otherwise he would probably have mentioned it. But it is very likely that there were people that knew that what can produce four horns can also make a unicorn. And so they produced artificial unicorns, the leaders of the herds, formidable with their straight horns, "white at the base and tipped with scarlet."

“MONK” LEWIS

By HUMPHREY HARE

LITERARY HISTORY IS starred with figures in whom tendencies subversive to the contemporary accepted order appear to have crystallized. Such were de Sade, Baudelaire, and the early Swinburne. They do not stand alone in their generations but typify, by their extravagance or by their genius, a minority point of view, which may be held equally by the poet, the novelist, the pornographic pamphleteer, or the fashionable playwright. Some survive the parent and the puritan to emerge into general acclamation; others achieve no more than a furtive notoriety and then oblivion. If, as has been asserted, classical literature is the manifestation of a civilization's need for a synthesis, for an ordering of its thoughts and views, Romantic literature is the revolt against the limitations necessary to this nice balancing of forces. It is this revolt which is at the back of the Romantic movement and which accounts, in particular, for one of its most characteristic aspects—that of erotic sensibility. By calling into use the terrible and the fabulous, all the paraphernalia of mystery and nightmare, by discovering beauty in the horrors of the charnel-house and the torture-chamber, in monstrous sins in an era conscious of sin, it drove a tortuous, fantastic path through the barriers of classical common sense.

By the end of the eighteenth century the main æsthetic plank in the Romantic platform had been established: Pain was found to be complementary to Pleasure, Horror to Beauty. In the early years of the next century we find constant confirmation of this theory among the poets. Indeed, from Shelley's lines written in 1819 on the

Medusa—“ Its horror and its beauty are divine,” and “ ’Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror ”—to its re-statement by the Decadent poets at the end of the century (what else is Dowson’s *To One in Bedlam* ?), this mingling of apparent opposites to make an æsthetic whole is both a recurrent theme and the hall-mark of Romantic sensibility.

We have mentioned Shelley and de Sade, Baudelaire and Swinburne, men whose lives, to some extent at least, were complementary to their works. But they were geniuses ; not the representatives but the sports of their age. The subject of this essay was, unfortunately, far from being a genius. Is it surprising that behind the immense façade of *The Monk*’s notoriety we should find, not the eccentricity of a Beckford, not the flamboyance of a Byron, but the respectable insignificance of Matthew Gregory Lewis, whose most spectacular vice was a too certain consciousness of his own moral rectitude ? Indeed, there is a crushing lack of incident in Lewis’s life. Search as we may, there is no sign of even a single significant sin, nor a hint of the waywardness of the Romantic. Reluctantly we are forced to the conclusion that he was an ordinary man. His anonymous biographer of 1839 has shown us this, abundantly, in two volumes.

Born of rich parents, Lewis was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford. There was no need for him to earn his living by writing nor, in fact, by anything else ; it existed already in the form of Jamaican sugar plantations upon which laboured a satisfactory number of slaves. So satisfactory, indeed, that he was able whole-heartedly to approve the abolition of the slave trade. But, innocent though he was of every characteristic that goes to make the good writer, Lewis,

from early youth, was one of the most remarkable examples of a sufferer from the *cacoëthes scribendi* that literature has seen. Moreover, upon his publishing *The Monk* in 1795 at the age of nineteen, his success was instantaneous and immense. From that moment he was a celebrity and upon the reputation *The Monk* gave him was able to publish a long list of works which would daunt the most ardent of literary historians.

Lewis's success needs some explaining to the modern reader of *The Monk*. From time to time criticism was heaped upon it even in its own day by the more responsible literary journals. For instance, *The London Review* of February, 1797 (vol. xxxi), spoke of it as "this singular composition, which has neither *originality*, *morals* nor *probability* to recommend it". And in this *The London Review* was right. His sources admittedly included *Santon Barsisa*, a story published in the *Guardian* in 1713, Canzotte's *The Devil in Love*, Smollet's *Ferdinand*, *Count Fathom*, and Mrs. Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, while his most devastating spectre, *The Bleeding Nun*, was founded on a tradition "still", as he himself says, "credited in many parts of Germany." And yet, for all his lack of originality, Lewis created something new. For through him the Romantic cult of horror, which throughout the century had been sporadic in such mildly exotic works as *The Castle of Otranto* and *Vathek*, became endemic. The crude sensationalism, the entire lack of reticence which enabled him to carry the novel of horror to its furthest lengths, was irresistible in its appeal to a generation whose taste for the horrible had been whetted by Mrs. Radcliffe's timid triflings with the macabre. And furthermore, while, as Lewis's biographer remarks, "no shade of impropriety mingled

with the traits of her (Mrs. Radcliffe's) glowing pencil," Lewis had no hesitation in adding sex, suitably brutalized, to his confection of horror.

The plot of *The Monk* is entirely directed towards giving its author opportunity for the type of horrific description in which he excelled. It is in the main the story of a monk, Ambrosio, who, first seen in the odour of sanctity, rapidly degenerates through the machinations of an emissary of the devil introduced into his monastery in the double disguise of a woman dressed as a novice. As an example of Lewis's style when not dealing specifically in horror, it will be sufficient to quote from the culminating passage of what should have been the most dramatic love-scene in the whole story. The supposed novice has revealed her sex and her uncontrollable passion for Ambrosio :—

“ Your declaration has so much astonished me,” said he, “ that I am at present incapable of answering you. Do not insist upon a reply, Matilda : leave me to myself, I have need to be alone.”

“ I obey you ; but, before I go, promise me not to insist upon my quitting the abbey immediately.”

“ Matilda, reflect upon your situation ; reflect upon the consequences of your stay ; our separation is indispensable, and we must part.”

“ But not to-day, father ! Oh ! in pity, not to-day ! ”

“ You press me too hard ; but I cannot resist that tone of supplication. Since you insist upon it, I yield to your prayer ; I consent to your remaining here a sufficient time to prepare in some measure the brethren for your departure : stay yet two days ; but on the third ” (he sighed involuntarily) “ remember, that on the third we must part for ever ! ”

She caught his hand eagerly and pressed it to her lips.

“ On the third ! ” she exclaimed with an air of wild solemnity : “ you are right, father, you are right ! On the third we must part for ever ! ”

There was a dreadful expression in her eye as she uttered these words which penetrated the friar's soul with horror. Again she kissed his hand, and then fled with rapidity from the chamber.

The plot is complicated by a selection of grand passions between youthful grandees (the venue is Madrid) and young women who have a talent for placing themselves in distress. One of these has the misfortune to become the object of the Monk's desires. What should he do but kidnap her? Where should he place her but in a charnel-house? Lewis lingers lovingly over the inevitable rape among the bones and decaying corpses. Another of Lewis's heroines has been forced to take the veil against her will. She is about to commit the indiscretion of having an illegitimate child. The prioress immediately confines her in a dungeon. Rescued from this situation, she tells her story:—

“I threw myself upon my knees before the prioress, and besought her mercy in the most passionate and frantic terms.

“‘If not on me,’ said I, ‘look at least with pity on that innocent being, whose life is attached to mine! Great is my crime, but let not my child suffer for it! My baby has committed no fault. Oh, spare me for the sake of my unborn offspring, whom, ere it tastes life, your severity dooms to destruction! . . .’

“‘What!’ she (the prioress) exclaimed, with an exasperated air; ‘what! do you plead for the produce of your shame? . . .’”

The prioress remained adamant and the child, which was born “unassisted by art”, immediately died.

Lewis follows this up by composing several pages of “horror”. This has the curious effect of placing the climax of the book not, as logically it should be, with the rescuing of Agnes (for that is her somewhat inappropriate name) from the dungeon, but with the story

of her sufferings which she recounts afterwards. In fact the book may be said to have two climaxes: one of action and one of horror. And this reveals Lewis's weakness as a novelist: his inability to make horror an integral part of the story he has to tell. It is his inherent contradiction that the horror for which he wrote the book should never succeed in becoming more than an irrelevancy. The result to-day is that his most lurid passages can arouse nothing but ribald laughter unless, indeed, it be a mild disgust.

But the reader shall judge for himself.

“I vowed,” continued Agnes, “not to part with it (the child) while I had life: its presence was my only comfort, and no persuasion could induce me to give it up. It soon became a mass of putridity, and to every eye was a loathsome and disgusting object—to every eye but a mother's. In vain did human feelings bid me recoil from this emblem of mortality with repugnance. I persisted in holding my infant to my bosom, in lamenting it, loving it, admiring it! Hour after hour I passed upon my sorry couch, contemplating what had once been my child. I endeavoured to retrace its features through the livid corruption with which they were overspread. . . .

“Thus did I drag on my miserable existence. . . . Though exhausted, faint and weary, I trembled to profit by the approach of sleep. My slumbers were constantly interrupted by some obnoxious insect crawling over me. Sometimes I felt the bloated toad, hideous and pampered with the poisonous vapours of the dungeon, dragging his loathsome length along my bosom: sometimes the quick cold lizard roused me, leaving his slimy track upon my face, and entangling itself in the tresses of my wild and matted hair. Often have I at waking found my fingers ringed with the long worms which bred in the corrupted flesh of my infant.”

However we may judge Lewis to-day, in his own time and during the first half of the nineteenth century his

influence was considerable. Many writers far more talented than Lewis drew upon *The Monk* for inspiration. The influence of his *femme fatale*, Matilda, may be traced in Sue, Chateaubriand, and Mérimée, not to speak of Flaubert's Salammbô. While Victor Hugo drew upon it for the characters of the persecuted Esmeralda and the wicked priest, Claude Frollo, and George Sand for those of Lélia and the priest Magnus, Scott, too, derived in part from *The Monk* the idea of the Knight Templar's love for the Jewess Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*.

In spite of its great popularity, there was considerable clamour in the Press against its immorality. No one seems to have been more surprised at this than Lewis himself—particularly when the Attorney-General was instructed by one of the many societies for the prevention of vice to move for an injunction against its sale. A rule *nisi* was obtained but it was never made absolute and the prosecution was dropped. Lewis, however, prepared a second edition from which he “expunged every syllable on which could be grounded the slightest construction of immorality”. Indeed, though the book's popularity was never in doubt, he seems to have taken this criticism to heart, for in the following year he produced *The Castle Spectre*, a musical play, only after his sister, Lady Lushington, had struck out such passages as she considered liable to give offence with “the delicate tact of a correct judgement, and a pure and pious mind”. *The Castle Spectre* was followed by a number of other plays: *The Minister*, which was a translation of Schiller's *Cabale und Liebe*, *The Twins*, *East Indian*, *Adelmorn*, *the Outlaw*, *Alfonso*, *King of Castile*, *The Bravo of Venice*—the list is interminable. They were mostly produced at Drury Lane and in

many of them Mrs. Jordan took part. Lewis was never able quite to repeat on the stage his success with *The Monk*, but on one occasion at least he succeeded in horrifying his audience to such an extent that the play had to be taken off. This was the famous monodrama, *The Captive*, which was produced at Covent Garden in 1803. Mrs. Litchfield, the celebrated actress, took the part of a woman incarcerated in a mad-house. To the accompaniment of clanking chains, maniacs with “glaring eyes”, loud shrieks, blazing firebrands, music both harsh and melancholy, her reason gives way, till at the sight of her child it is miraculously restored at the final curtain. But Lewis had over-reached himself. “Never did Covent Garden present such a picture of agitation and dismay. Ladies bathed in tears—others fainting—some shrieking with terror—while such of the audience who were able to avoid demonstrations like these, sat aghast, with pale horror painted on their countenances.” As Lewis himself wrote to his mother: “The only chance was, whether pity would make the audience weep; but, instead of that, terror threw them into fits; and, of course, there was an end of my monodrama.”

During these years celebrity and the wealth inherited from his father enabled Lewis to move in the highest society. He gradually dropped the use of his second initial and was delighted when addressed as “Monk Lewis Esq.” He entertained the Duchess of York at his “pretty romantic retreat” at Barnes to a *fête champêtre* upon the lawn before his statues of Cupid and Fortune. In return he was a frequent visitor to Oatlands among the dogs, parrots, and monkeys which the Duchess maintained in such profusion. Her Royal

Highness even presented him with a spaniel, named Folly, as a token of her esteem. He dined at Bushey Park where the Duke of Clarence lived in retirement with Mrs. Jordan, the actress. He stayed at Inverary Castle ; at Woburn ; with Lord Melbourne. He supped with the Princess of Wales at the Admiralty. He was very nearly involved in an affair of honour with Captain Percy, Lord Beverly's son, who insulted him when drunk at a masquerade. He exchanged verses with Charles James Fox and in 1806 wrote a large number of "lines" on the occasion of Fox's funeral. Indeed, Lewis was a prolific versifier, though perhaps the less said about these productions the better. It is, however, impossible to resist a quotation from some dramatic verses entitled *The Mother's Alarm*. Their bathos is sufficient comment upon the rest :—

The Mother came—she saw her boy,
Her only care, her only joy,
One crag his fall suspending.

The large number of verses of this type are witness at least to his industry.

Towards the end of the year 1815, Lewis set out for the West Indies with the object of personally inspecting his estates. His position as a slave-owner was difficult to reconcile with his reputation as an enlightened man and his friendship with Wilberforce. Characteristically, he chose a middle course. For the rest of his life he was to be much concerned with the amelioration of the condition of his slaves ; "an object," as his biographer puts it, "in which he warmly reciprocated the wishes of his benevolent friend Mr. Wilberforce, though he could never precisely agree with the great philanthropist as to the means of attaining it." In fact, he was willing

that his slaves should be as happy as possible so long as his income was assured by their labour. He thoroughly enjoyed his reception by the Negroes, though he reported "that they shouted and sang me into a violent headache". "To be sure," he wrote, "I never saw people look more happy in my life ; and I believe their condition to be much more comfortable than that of the labourers of Great Britain ; and, after all, slavery in *their* case is but another name for servitude ; now that no more Negroes can be forcibly carried away from Africa, and subjected to the horrors of the voyage, and of the seasoning after their arrival." Nevertheless, before leaving, he conferred one great benefit upon his slaves : they were never to be flogged without the express permission of his trustee ; the European disobeying this order was to be immediately discharged ; and the Negro driver degraded and sent to work in the field.

This visit to Jamaica was to have a curious sequel. In August, 1816, he prepared a codicil to his will which insisted that his heirs should 'visit the Jamaican estates for a period of three months in every third year. Only thus, he thought, could the Negroes be protected from ill-treatment. He further insisted that no Negroes should be sold from the estate to which they belonged, though they might be set free. This codicil was written at the Maison Diodati, Geneva, and witnessed : Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Polidori.

It was on this occasion, too, that Byron read his friends some German ghost-stories and invited them each to write one. Lewis, apparently, failed to oblige. But Mrs. Shelley conceived *Frankenstein* ; Byron, himself, part of a tale of horror, which was published in 1819 as *A Fragment* ; and Dr. Polidori produced *The*

Vampire which, appearing in the *New Monthly Magazine* under the name of Byron owing to a misunderstanding on the part of the editor, deceived Goethe into declaring it the best thing the poet had written.

In the following year Lewis made a second voyage to Jamaica—a voyage from which he did not return. On the way home yellow fever broke out in the ship and Lewis was one of the first to be affected. On May 14th, 1818, at the age of forty-two, he expired in the arms of Baptista, his Venetian valet, who six years later was to be present at another, more famous death-bed in Missolonghi. Owing to the risk of infection Lewis was buried at sea.

POETRY

BEES BEFORE WINTER

HIS BEES WENT very far that night,
As far as they could go,
Some came back bearing honey,
Some brought back flakes of snow !

MERRILL MOORE

THE SACRIFICE

AND A YOUNG man rose from the grave
On a cool cloudless morning,
And his flesh was grey and blistered,
And he lifted yellow eyes
Toward the rising sun.
Stretching his body, he groaned,
And gazed at the crimson glow in the east ;
And because the sky was beautiful,
And mountain-tops in the distance sparkled with life
(A mule brayed then among the reeds and stones),
And because he imagined children in far-off valleys
laughing,
He said : " This body will stain the luminous earth."'
And he smiled wanly, then closed his eyes,
And crept back into the grave.

IDRIS DAVIES

MAN IN HIS FATAL HUNGER

MAN PEERS INTO the gulf of his large hand
And sees a storm of symbols labouring there :
Before the darkening disk of distance stands
The ghastly jaguar combing his leprous hair :

Among the bubbling amber straw of stars
There glides, with planets shunting on its back,
An insect, vanishing through fragrant doors,
While time is smoking sky above a shack :

And in the throes of a vast negligence
The strange hyena at the lighted glass
Foams at the tensile ligaments of sense,
Its horrible laughter lashing at the grass :

Hyena, jaguar, insect—these draw breath
And balk the hero climbing out of land :
Man in his fatal hunger knows no death
So deep as the abyss within his hand. . . .

OSCAR WILLIAMS

THE TWILIGHT OF THE YOUNG MEN

NOW IS THE hour of young men on front porches
in shirtsleeves vacantly they stand. Their mothers
are washing the supper dishes their fathers
are reading the evening paper their kid brothers
out on the lawn are sailing model aeroplanes
and everywhere shut in pink bedrooms young girls
flirt with their mirrors. Now is the hour of young men.

Vacantly they stand. They do not hear the birds
clothing the trees with their small round bodies
going noisily to sleep. Full of the air these cries
but the young men seem no more concerned with them
than the young girls shut everywhere in bedrooms.

The young men have worked hard a long day at
nothing—
a job. Now they do not fly toys nor can they read
the newspaper in carpet slippers seriously.
Now they must stand on wooden porches.

Their hair has been wet and combed for this hour.
Their trousers are not the ones they wore to work.
That they have bathed and have shaved
is shown by their gleaming strong arms
and the pallor of their set jaws. Not purposely set.
The young men have no will of their own or
if they have what does it matter.

(Across the way Dick takes his small son walking.)
Born to be betrayed—between mother and dad
inside and the kid brother there on the lawn—
staidly unafraid they stand as quiet and more quiet
grow the birds arch and more arch the glances
flashed by the mirrors of those stalking
their hour and the power of darkness.

WILLIAM JUSTEMA

O WHO WILL SPEAK FROM A WOMB OR CLOUD

NOT LESS LIGHT shall the gold and the green lie
On the cyclonic curl and the diamonded eye, than
Love lay yesterday on the breast like a beast.
Not less light shall God tread my maze of nerve
Than that great dread of to-morrow drove over
My maze of days. Nor less terrible that tread
Stamping upon your grave than I shall tread there.
Who is a god to haunt the tomb but Love?

Therefore I shall be there at morning and midnight,
Not with a straw in my hair and a tear's Ophelia
Floating along my sorrow, but I shall come with
The cabala of things, the cipher of nature, so that
With the mere flounce of a bird's feather crest
I shall speak to you where you sit on all trees,
Where you conspire with all things that are dead.
Who is so far that Love cannot speak to him?

So that no corner can hide you, no autumn of leaves
So deeply close over you that I shall not find you,
To stretch down my hand and sting you with life
Like a poison that resurrects. O remember
How once the Lyrae dazzled and how the Novembers
Smoked, so that the blood burned, flashed in fire,
And that was being. Now if I dip my hand in your
grave
Shall I find it bloody with autumn and bright with stars?
Who is to answer if you will not answer me?

But you are the not yet dead, so cannot answer.
Hung by a hair's breadth to the breath of the lung,
Nothing you know of the hole over which you hang
But that it's dark and deep as to-morrow midnight.
I ask, but you cannot answer except with words
Which show me the mere interior of your fear,
The reverse face of the world. But this,
This is not death, the standing on the head
So that a sky is seen. O who,
Who but the not yet born can tell me of my bourne?

Lie you there, lie you there, my never, never,
Never to be delivered daughter, so wise in ways

Where she perches like a bird beyond the horizon,
Seeing but not being seen, above our being ?
Then tell me, shall the meeting ever be,
When the corpse dives back through the womb
To clasp his child before it ever was ?
Who but the dead can kiss the not yet born ?

Sad is space between a start and a finish
Like the rough roads of stars, fiery and mad.
I go between the birth and the urn, an ash
Soon blazed to blank, like a meteor. But
Nothing I bring from the before, no message,
No clue, no key, no answer. I hear no echo,
Only the sheep's blood dripping from the gun,
The eagle's tear like fire on the branch.
O who will speak from a womb or cloud !

GEORGE BARKER

“GETCHETA”

By A. W. H. MACDONALD

“NAH, MATE,” SAID the tramp, leaning back against the grassy bank in high content and drawing luxuriously at Mr. Pivett’s cigarette, “Let’s ’ear all about it.” Mr. Pivett began by coughing nervously. His explanations to himself had been adequate and easy. It was more difficult to explain baldly to this fat and incredibly unwashed specimen of nomad humanity. Tramps he had always regarded as humanity’s outside edge. The narrow respectability of his life hitherto had been far too well ordered to include such unrooted scamps. They were notoriously shiftless, cunning, and thieving. They toiled not, neither did they pay rates. They had no abiding place, and hence, Mr. Pivett mused, no housework. They cleaned neither windows nor brasses, rolled no lawns, washed no dishes. Mr. Pivett loathed dishes. Loathed so many of the menial tasks that lurked behind the unreal gloss of a too well run house. Undesirable tramps were, but oh! so free.

“Well,” said Mr. Pivett at length, “I don’t rightly know. Sort of lost my memory and wandered as you might say. Result of ’flu. ‘Hysterical fuge’ they call it. There’s a lot in the papers about it lately. I walked and walked—and here I am.”

“Ar,” said the tramp, nodding wisely, “I know. Runaway ’usband ain’t yer? Couldn’t stick it any longer. I’ve met ’em before. There was a bloke I met dahn in the New Forest a year or two back. Proper toff ’e was. Real chummed up we did for a long time. Clever too. Didn’t take ’im long to learn. W’y, in a few weeks ’e could pick up a chicken, say, very near as

well as I can. 'T'aint everybody wot gets chicken these days, Mate."

The tramp sank into a gentle reverie induced by memories of fragrant meals, unbought and unearned, like the one he had just shared, out of the goodness of his heart, with the near-starving Mr. Pivett. He gazed through the smoke of Mr. Pivett's cigarette up into the faintly springlike blue of the sky. Around them hedge and tree and turf shone modestly in new-discovered green. The eager air was full of the tantalizing odours of growth and quickening. Only, it seemed to Mr. Pivett, the unlovely bulk of his companion, draped as it was in motley, unfathomable rags, and surmounted by a red stubble-peppered face, marred the living beauty of the scene. That and the dark smudge of their still smouldering fire and the curious assortment of packages and ancient tin vessels that formed the tramp's equipment and was now scattered between them.

"Ar," said the tramp, returning from his reverie, "'E got picked up himself, though. Some village copper reckernized 'im from the description. Mind you, I aint got too much time for toffs meself. Too fond o' dorgs they are fer one thing. They're all right and they ain't if y' know wot I mean. Nah, you an' me could get on fine. I seen that right away. 'Owever, tell us some more, mate."

Mr. Pivett coughed again.

"Well, you see, the real trouble was my wife—."

"Ar," nodded the tramp, "It aint unusual with married men. Matter of fac' I was married meself—once."

"My wife was a good wife—too good. House proud as they say. Always at it. And expected me to be the

same. I'd ha' preferred to be a bit more free and easy and comfortable. If a man bring his money home to his own house and don't drink or go to the dogs or football, surely he's entitled to a bit of comfort, isn't he?"

Mr. Pivett was very voluble. This was the subject which had exercised his mind throughout many years of domestic drudgery. His small face flushed and his eyes brightened.

"Comfort," he went on rapidly, "That's what a man wants and that's what he is entitled to. What does it matter if there is a mark on the lino in the hall so long as he can put his feet up and enjoy a quiet pipe? I never could. No sooner had I got my bit of food than she would start. Sometimes even before that. Before I set foot in my own house. 'Getcheta,' she would say and 'getcheta'. Getcheta clean out the coal hole, getcheta clean the brasses, getcheta tidy this and polish that. Getcheta to wash the dishes. Getcheta, getcheta—it fair drove me mad."

Mr. Pivett's rather thin voice rose and quavered. The tramp glanced sideways at him. Mr. Pivett was staring hard down a vista of years of getcheta.

"Yers, mate," soothed the tramp, "Get under anybody's skin I reckon. 'Owever, you've finished with it nah. Nobody says getcheta to me. I pleases meself I do. An' I'm comfortable. Look at me!"

He lolled back, a veritable Lord of the Unwashed, a lusty animal, almost free of the bonds of civilization, and escaped completely from respectability. Mr. Pivett drew in a sharp breath and returned to the present.

"Yes," he agreed slowly, "You look well enough—and there's no housework for you."

"Well then, mate," invited the tramp easily, "W'y

not stick with me? I needs a mate I do. It's easier working farm-'ouses and such like. Two can live easier than one. Nah what d'ye say?"

Mr. Pivett hesitated.

"It's a rough sort of life and I don't know that I'm used to it," he said at length. "I've seen a lot this last week or two. I'd like a nice clean bed to lie in an' a mantelpiece to put my feet on."

The tramp made a gesture.

"Well then, Mate," he exclaimed with an air of closing the discussion, "You git orff back and go down on yer bended knees an' lick the oilclorth. That's all I got ter say an' that's wot you better do."

He lay back again and contemplated a tenuous cloud. Mr. Pivett stared hard at a bird of (to him) unknown species which appeared deeply interested in them both.

"I—I can't do that," enunciated the wretched Mr. Pivett at length.

"No?" returned the tramp lightly, "Wot are yer goin' to do then? Got any tin?"

"Tin?"

"Yers. Oof. Spondulicks. Brarss. Money."

"I've got one and eleven," admitted Mr. Pivett, shamefaced. It was degrading to have to reveal his poverty to this fellow.

"I got 'arf-a-crahn," said the tramp complacently. "Always keep it. Pleece carn't touch yer if yer got a bit o' silver. 'Wandering withaht visible means and hetcetera,' if yer know wot I mean. Well there it is, mate. Take it or leave it. Withaht me the pleece 'll soon pick yer up and yer'll be back on the oilclorth. And yer won't get away a second time."

Mr. Pivett shivered. For the first time he realized how

completely he had cut himself off from respectability. It seemed he had no option but to accept the tramp's offer.

"P'raps it would be better if I was to stick with you for a time," he agreed at length.

"Right, mate!" exclaimed the tramp heartily, "That's settled then. You an' me's pardners. Share an' share alike. Only there's one thing. Me bein' the old 'and at the game as yer might say, I've gotter be the boss. I know the ropes, you don't. Wot I say 'as gotter go. That's common sense, aint it?"

"I suppose so," agreed Mr. Pivett.

"Course it is," affirmed the tramp, "You stick by me an' do just as I say an' you'll be all right, see?"

"Very well," said Mr. Pivett, "I'll do my best."

"Right y'are," said the tramp, sitting up and stretching himself royally, "We'll be getting along, mate. I'll show yer 'ow ter pack yer swag. Getcheta t'clean out the fryin' pan. . . ."

PROBLEM IN COLOUR

By LORNA SLATER

PART I

I HAVE A room to myself here: small, but it can be locked. The window looks toward the sea and I can hear the noise of the sea, far away; it is sad to hear it.

The wind is blowing in the darkness with small cold rain. It cries and rattles the panes and makes the curtain flutter. I shut the window and the little room is quiet in the lamplight.

So I am a prisoner, self-imprisoned, for I am not going to unlock that door or join the others. They are talking and laughing together in the lighted dining-room and I am alone here. It seems important that I should not join them for I will not be like them: no, I am not the same. When I was at the Convent no one thought, no one dreamed, that there was anything wrong with me. I look as white as any other girl. I have even reddish hair (red-brown) and a small face, with little dark freckles. My features are European. I speak like a European and behave like one. That is why I will not be like these people, though they are my own mother's people: coloured people. The sisters at the convent warned me (it was so long since I had been at home).

"You will never be able to marry a white man," they said, and they wanted me to stay at the Convent. But I do not want to be a nun: cold, fruitless. Oh, I know that is a wicked way to speak, but I do not want to be a nun. So I came home.

That is my grandmother knocking at the door.

"Aren't you coming, Cora?" she asks, and her voice has a complaining note again. "The teacher and his wife are here."

I say that I am going to bed.

"What is it? You sit alone," her voice is sharp.

"I am tired, Granny."

She twists the handle again and I hear her footsteps as she goes away. She is not pleased with me.

I am off to work next morning. I have a good job in an office, as a typist; there they all think I am a European girl.

"I am going to the shops this afternoon," says my grandmother, as she gives me my lunch. We are standing at the table after breakfast. "You can come for me at the Link Stores on your way home."

"Perhaps I shall be working late."

She looks at me and I at her. She knows, and I know, why I avoid walking home with her. It is between us but we will not say it. . . .

What was my father like, I wonder? Why did he do this to me? And, again, do I not pay for my board? It is not necessary for me to walk through the streets with her. Why does she look at me as if I had injured her? I wonder, if my mother were alive, would I dread to be seen with her, the gentle soft-voiced creature whom I hardly remember? I used to cling to her flowing white skirts when I began to walk. I remember the rings on her brown hands; her face I remember a little and her kind arms. Oh, mother, mother. And this is her mother.

"Good-bye, Granny."

I kiss her sagging old brown cheek but she does not respond. I do not meet her in town that afternoon.

One day at work an idea comes to me. It is this. There is a Working Girls' Club in the North End and one of our girls lives there. It would cost £1 more than I am paying now but still I could afford it. And there I could have friends and see people. I know I cannot marry a white man but there is no law to say I must not have friends. I shall never marry. . . . There is no law to say I may not live where I like and have friends.

There is a quarrel at home when I tell them my plans. We are at table after supper. My grandfather is drinking tea out of a thick white cup with a pink rose on it. The tea is hot and he pours it into his saucer and his eyes look at me over the rim of the saucer when I make my announcement. He has brown eyes like a little shaggy terrier—hot eyes.

My grandmother talks and will not listen to me. She is very angry. Afterwards she cries and goes away. My Aunt Mieta says that I am bad and want to have lovers. But really I am not bad. The old man looks at me patiently with his face puckered and worried. I look at his humble old face. He says that I had better go, it is right for me to better myself. This makes me cry. . . .

PART II

At the Club I have friends. We eat at a long table with a white cloth as we did at the Convent. We all talk and laugh. Sometimes Miss Lang rings her little bell for silence. There is a coloured girl waiting at our table: a quiet brown-faced girl with neat, frizzy hair. She stands with her back to the wall while we are eating and sometimes my eyes meet hers. It is not, it is not

fair, but it would do her no good for me to share her disadvantages.

Daisy's friend, Arthur, has a brother called Cyril, who has a little car. The two boys take us out. It is at this time that I make myself a dark green dress. Daisy and I are in front of the long mirror on the stairs and she kneels to cut the dress straight all round the skirt. I stand with the green cloth pinned together, my arms naked and my hair in disorder. I look at myself in the mirror and seem to see there a strange girl, eager, looking at me with hot brown eyes. I am pretty that night. Daisy and I buy some red nail varnish: Miss Lang says it is very common to have red nails: the boys make jokes about our nails but they think we are smart and fashionable.

Miss Lang sends for me one evening and makes me sit down in her study while I wonder what I have done or what good advice I am to receive. She begins by saying that I look nice in my green dress.

"There is absolutely no reason," she says, "why you should not be proud of your looks and make the best of them. You must try to use all your powers and educate yourself to be a pleasant, sensible, well-informed woman. There are many opportunities open to you."

I do not know what to say.

"But I do think it a mistake to see so much of that young Kebble and perhaps let yourself drift into a love affair. It wouldn't be right to think of marrying him."

So she knows about me!

She explains that soon after I came to the Club, she received a letter about me saying that I was of "mixed

parentage". Though she does not like anonymous letters she thought it as well to make some inquiries. But she does not want me to leave the Club.

"Only it is not right, is it, for a person who is not quite a European to marry a European? This young man would not be willing if he knew."

I find myself trembling. "He might never know."

"Do you think the writer of that letter would leave him in ignorance?"

Then she talks of the children we might have, how they would have my trouble passed on to them. I can do nothing but agree with her. She says that she would feel bound to tell Cyril about me if we were going to be married.

"I will not see him again."

I go out and try not to think, but that night it all comes to me and I say passionately in my heart that my children would be as good as any other girl's. Why should I not have children? Why should my children not have a white father? I begin to sob and tell myself that Cyril is nothing, he is no better than I am. He is ignorant, he never reads, his ways are rough. Why is he too good for me? I am as good as he is. But let him go. He is rough and common and ignorant but he is European and so I cannot have him. I let him go.

Miss Lang lends me books at this time and I read a lot, as I did at the Convent. She thinks I should play the piano again. One night she gives me two tickets for a concert and says I may take a friend.

It is Paulina who comes to the concert with me, for Daisy and I are not friends any more. Paulina is a sallow girl who, I cannot help thinking, could be very impudent: she would not put up with any nonsense. She is wearing

a pink dress of shiny material and she walks with an air. We pass my grandmother in the street but I do not look at her.

At the concert I can only think of what I have done in passing her by and I keep telling myself that it was the only thing to do and that it would have ruined me to acknowledge her. Besides, she and I have quarrelled. Miss Lang would be shocked if she knew, but what does she expect me to do? She has had no such troubles. I hardly attend to the music and we join in the clapping half-heartedly. Paulina says she likes a nice picture with lots of singing and dancing, not this classical stuff. On the way home she tells me about her boys and the good times they have and the smart things she says to them. I listen as if in a dream.

"I'm darem sick of this place," she says as we get back to the Club. "Ek is tog nie 'n kind nie. Hierdie rules maak my siek."

I am sick of the Club, too, sick of those kind, watchful eyes. . . . I lie awake after my long empty evenings, I cannot sleep. Books make me restless; when I hear music I am unhappy. But I do not like Paulina and I make up my mind that if she asks me to leave the Club and board with her at her Aunt's I will say "no". She has hinted at it more than once. When she asks me, to my own surprise I cannot refuse. There is no struggle, I just say "yes".

PART III

This is a dark house: dark and dirty. I don't like it. What I first noticed when I got here was that the curtains were not clean. I share a room with Paulina.

I am sorry now that I have made Miss Lang angry with me. She did not like my not taking her advice ; but I am not old like Miss Lang. I like a little gaiety, a little going-about with other people even if I can never marry. I am determined that I will never marry a man who is not a European : I could not live as a coloured woman. Nobody would dream that I was not a European to look at me. If I had not been brought up at the Convent, it might have been different.

I see it will be of no use being able to play the piano here. There is only a very out-of-tune rickety old piano with a white mat of crocheted lace on top of it and a great many china ornaments. The sitting-room is an expensively-furnished room, dark, but cleaner than the rest of the house. When we come into it we do not pull up the blinds, we turn on the light. I don't think the sitting-room windows have ever been opened.

My grandmother's house was not dirty though she did not like open windows as we had at the Club. I see the Groblers do not like open windows either and their window panes are dirtier than my grandmother's. There is a paved yard at the back of the house with a grape-vine and it could be very pretty but they throw dirty water into the yard and make it smell nasty. You find potato peelings and greasy spoons lying about after the dish-water has been thrown out. Perhaps I can find some other place to board at : I can't go back to the Club.

Paulina's boy came to see her this evening and they went to the Bioscope. Paulina wore her pink silk but I notice she does not trouble much about a clean petticoat. . . . I thought my washing would be back this afternoon but they say the washerwoman came late this week.

I will not have clean clothes for to-morrow. . . . I am still very much pleased with my dark green dress. I think green is my colour. There is some white material with green spots which would make a pretty dress for the office. . . . If I go to the Bioscope with Nicholas I must wear my dark green ! He says he will take me on Saturday evening. Nicholas is Paulina's cousin, very good-looking.

Paulina seems very friendly but I am sorry to find that she is still awake when I come in on Saturday evening. She asks me how I like Nicholas. I say he is very nice and begin to tell her about the film. Paulina says Nicholas is "very struck". The fact is Nicholas is one of the best-looking boys I have ever seen. He has rough fair hair and bright blue eyes and makes one think of a cowboy : I should think he is very strong. He hardly speaks at all and I cannot always understand him when he does because he speaks indistinctly. He tried to take my hand at the Bioscope and wants to kiss me and all that, but I don't think I want him to. Paulina goes on teasing me about Nicholas. Perhaps I am a bit of a nun but I don't like some of the things Paulina says : but perhaps it is just the way they talk. Paulina watches me undress and says I am too skinny. I put out the light and say my prayers in the dark and then I pretend to be asleep. How I wish Paulina would not leave her clothes on the floor and spill her powder all over the dressing-table. . . .

This evening I am sure the Groblers have been talking about me. I come in while they are at supper and tell them I have been shopping. I show them my new material for the office dress. Mrs. Grobler says with a funny smile that she too would like her money, so I pay

her for my board. She says there is 10s. extra for washing. I thought that was included but I pay the 10s. though it seems too much.

Later on, Paulina begins to ask me where my home is and who my parents are. I say that I am an orphan and was brought up at the Convent, which is quite true. Then I say that both my parents came from England. She seems strange in her manner and I feel sure they have heard something about me and my stomach feels empty: I begin to feel quite sick and can do nothing but answer politely. Mrs. Grobler says, "Shame, Paulina," and gives me some sweets. She admires the new material very much and says how pretty I am. I wonder why she says that, but I can't help hoping that she really thinks so.

There are two Mr. Davidsons at the office: old Mr. Davidson, who is the owner of the business, and his nephew. Young Mr. Davidson has just come into the business after being at college. He is fair, too, with soft, untidy hair that falls forward a little when he is working: he is shy but has a nice smile. When I do typing for him he dictates very badly. He always stands up when I bring him his tea, which I think is very good manners.

I notice that young Mr. Davidson does not seem to enjoy his tea and one day I ask him what is wrong with it, and as he is so nervous I smile at him. He says it was ridiculous of him but he must have forgotten to tell me that he does not take sugar. I can see that he thinks it is I who have forgotten what he has told me. I say I will make him another cup.

"Don't trouble to do that, only to-morrow—"

"But, of course, you must have some more tea."

I bring him a fresh cup, very hot and good.

"I say, that's awfully good of you," he says.

We often have a little chat now. He tells me that he does not like this town, except for the docks. He says the poorer parts of the town are abominable and the better parts pretentious. He loves to see the shipping. He tells me how he tried to run away to sea when he was a little boy. He has interesting views on everything. Really, I have never known such a nice man to talk to. He is hardly shy at all now.

I am determined that I will not be like Paulina and go to work with dirty nails and clothes not quite clean.

PART IV

I wonder what I have done. Everything is changed now, everything is miserable. In the first place, I am no longer young Mr. Davidson's typist. Amy goes to his room instead of me. I type for old Mr. Davidson, who is big and gruff and seems to bark at me. He says: "Girl, what did they teach you at school?" when I make a mistake. I am sure I am no worse than Amy, but of course she is quite old. My Mr. Davidson still smiles at me when he says "Good morning", and thanks me when I bring him his tea, but we have no more little chats. Does he tell Amy things now behind that shut door? What is it? What have I done? I am afraid to think about it. Perhaps—but then old Mr. Davidson would not keep me on at all, would he? I do not understand them.

It is curious how, while the person one likes may be indifferent, the person one dislikes is often quite the reverse. Nicholas is always teasing me to go out with him. Mrs. Grobler and Paulina do not like it, I am sure ;

yet they are angry with me about it. Nicholas grabs my hand and will not let it go and asks me whether I "kiss nicely".

One afternoon I am sitting in my room reading. Paulina is not back from the factory but Nicholas comes home early. He walks into my room, and I feel that it would be rude to say, "Go out of my room." He sits on the bed beside me and puts his arm round my waist. I say, "You mustn't do that," but he won't stop.

Suddenly I am absolutely terrified. I try to get away. I kick him on the legs and slap his face. He is angry but he won't let me go. Then Mrs. Grobler comes in and I feel very much ashamed.

I go to Mrs. Grobler in the kitchen after supper and say I am going to leave. My heart beats loudly—I find that I am really frightened. Then it is horrible, she says terrible things.

"You can go *now*, get out, voetsak. Aren't we good enough for you?" Then she calls me a coloured person, a Hottentot.

I cannot say a word.

She says terrible things. . . .

What am I to do? I run to my room and begin to pack my clothes. I am crying all the time. I hear them talking about me in the next room, loudly, so that I shall hear. But where am I to go? It is already evening. She must have known all along and that is why I have fancied that she hated me.

Where can I go? I am ashamed to go to the Club. But why did she not drive me out long ago? Where can I go? I suppose I shall go to my grandmother.

WEEK-END WITH ALISTAIR

By FRED URQUHART

"DO YOU TAKE one or two baths a day?" Alistair said as they went upstairs.

"I think one will be plenty," Bill said, wondering how he had managed not to gasp with surprise. Already he was throwing his imagination forward, telling the folk at home all about it. *I nearly fell down the stair with fright*, he informed his invisible audience. *One or two baths a day? Me that takes about one a month!*

"This is your room," Alistair said. "I hope you'll find everything okay."

"It's very nice," Bill said.

"That's the bathroom along there," Alistair said. "Just come down when you're ready."

Left alone, Bill surveyed the room. He took careful note of every detail, because his mother would want a full account when he went home. She would want to tell all her friends about the posh people where our Bill spent the week-end. "A friend of his at the 'Varsity, you know. They've plenty of money."

He washed his hands and brushed his hair. He stood for a while before the mirror, examining his suit, wishing it didn't look so shabby. It looked cheap and ready-made in comparison with Alistair's expensive tweed jacket and flannels.

Mrs. Metcalfe was in the hall when he went downstairs.

"I hope you'll enjoy your week-end, Mr. Forbes," she said, widening her heavily-painted lips into a smile.

"I'm sure I will," Bill said. He wondered if his own mother would make as bad an impression on Alistair as Alistair's mother made on him. He thought her

affected. It was stupid for a woman of her age to use such a bright geranium shade of lipstick.

"Alistair's in the garden with the children," Mrs. Metcalfe said. "Perhaps you'd like to join them." She trailed to the drawing-room door, a stream of cigarette-smoke billowing behind her. She gave him another artificial smile as she opened the door and went inside.

Should I have sprung forward and opened the door for her? Bill wondered as he ran down the stone steps at the front-door. It was so difficult to remember all these trivial points of etiquette when one wasn't in the habit of troubling about them normally. They were so pointless, anyway. She was as able to open the door as he was. Besides, if he had sprung forward he would have been certain to have tripped over a rug or to have done something else foolish.

Walking across the lawn, from which all the dead leaves had been carefully swept, he hoped that he would manage to get through the week-end without committing any *faux-pas*. It was all very well to joke about these things when he went home, but it wasn't such a funny matter when one was actually committing them. They were amusing only when surveyed in retrospect.

Alistair's two younger brothers were showing him the motor-bike that Peter had recently purchased. "You should see him on it," Alan said. "He's Caution personified. He never goes at more than twenty, and when he's going round corners, he almost stops. He holds his hand out for half a mile before he comes to them, too! What a daredevil!"

"You don't need to talk," Peter said angrily. "You don't go very fast yourself."

"If I did, you would have something to say. You're terrified your old bike gets smashed up."

Alistair and Bill left the two youths arguing about this, and went in for tea. Mrs. Metcalfe was sitting in the drawing-room with the tea-trolley beside her. Bill was hungry after the long train journey and his spirits fell when he saw the tiny sandwiches and scones.

"Milk and sugar, Mr. Forbes?" Mrs. Metcalfe looked up brightly.

"Bill," Alistair said.

"Bill," she said.

"Both milk and sugar," Bill said, hoping that he wasn't blushing. He sat on the edge of the chesterfield and held his cup and saucer gingerly. Primly he took a sandwich from the plate that Alistair held towards him. He began to nibble it, his appetite suddenly leaving him.

"How are your studies, Alistair?" said his mother.

"Fine," he said.

"That's what he always says." She turned appealingly to Bill. "Is he telling the truth, Mr. Forbes?"

"Oh, yes, he's been doing awfully well."

"Another sandwich, Bill?" Alistair handed him the plate.

"Thanks." Delicately he nibbled the tiny square of bread and butter.

"You're medical, too, aren't you, Mr. Forbes?"

"Bill," Alistair said.

"Bill." She smiled over the rim of the shallow green and gold cup. "I must remember."

Bill grinned politely. "I'm in my second year, too."

"You medicals have such an interesting time, I always think. Though it must be a bit gruesome, too."

"I suppose every profession has its nasty side," Bill said.

"Like people!" she laughed.

"Yes," he said.

"A scone, Bill?"

"No, thank you," Bill said. "I've had enough."

"Sensible man," Mrs. Metcalfe said, brushing the crumbs from her lap. "Now, Alistair never knows when to stop. I always tell him that he eats far too much. If he's not careful he'll turn into a big fat man."

"I'll stand the risk," Alistair said, popping another sandwich into his mouth.

Bill was wondering whether he should take out his cigarette-case when Mrs. Metcalfe said: "There are cigarettes behind you, Mr. Forbes."

"Oh, have one of mine." He held out his case.

"Not at all," she said. "Have one of these. But perhaps you don't like Churchman?"

"Oh yes," he said, putting his case back in his pocket. He struck a match and held it out for her. As he bent over her he could see the powder thick in the wrinkles beneath her eyes.

"Aren't the boys going to have any tea?" She blew a cloud of cigarette-smoke into the air. "You might give them a shout, Alistair."

"I think they've eaten already," Alistair said, helping himself to another sandwich. "I saw them in the kitchen with cook."

"She spoils them." Mrs. Metcalfe began to move about the room, picking up books and laying them down again, twisting an ornament into another position. Thin wisps of smoke trailed behind her like streamers. She sat down at the piano and dragged her be-ringed hands over the keys. "Do you still play, Alistair?"

"I haven't had much time recently," he said.

"Such a pity," she said. "You play so beautifully."

She rose and crossed to the fireplace. Leaning over so that the firelight caught her eyes, making them glitter: "Do you play, Mr—er—Bill?"

"I'm afraid not," he said.

"Perhaps you aren't interested in music?"

"Oh yes, very much," he said. He did not say: *We haven't got a piano. We've never had one because we couldn't afford one.* What was the use? She wouldn't understand.

"I think all children should be taught the piano or some musical instrument," she said. "It seems cruel to them at the time, but they thank you for it when they grow up. Don't you agree?"

"Oh yes," Bill said.

She moved listlessly towards the door. "I've some letters to write. I'll see you at dinner." She opened the door before Bill remembered that he should have sprung to open it for her. "Dinner at seven, Mr—er—Bill! There I am again! I must remember. We have it then to suit my husband's coming home from business."

She almost closed the door, then she opened it to say: "I'll ask Jennie to run your baths, Alistair. Your friend and you can decide which of you can have yours first."

Bill leaned back on the chesterfield and watched Alistair: a different Alistair from the Alistair he knew so well at medical school. Here the shyness and the appealing helplessness were beginning to disappear. He was on his own ground here. For the first time Bill became conscious of the difference in class.

"Well, shall we toss for it?" Alistair said. "Heads I go first."

"Okay," Bill said.

It was tails. As he went upstairs Bill wished that it had been heads so that he could have had a little longer to sit in the darkening drawing-room and watch the shadows cast by the fire on the cream walls. He undressed quickly so as not to keep Alistair waiting. Standing in his pants and semmit, he wondered what he was going to do about a dressing-gown. The problem had never presented itself before. He had half-heartedly mentioned it to his mother before leaving, but she had said: "What good would it do you? You never have time at home to wear one. You can surely make your overcoat do for one week-end."

He put on his overcoat and, opening the door, he peered out cautiously to see if the coast was clear. He slipped quietly along the passage to the bathroom.

It was only as he was stepping out of the bath that he realized that he hadn't brought his towel with him from his room. The only towel in the bathroom was a small hand-towel. He dried himself as best he could with that. And feeling very damp and uncomfortable, he began to tiptoe along to his room.

"Oh, what a fright you gave me, Mr. Forbes!" Mrs. Metcalfe laughed artificially. "I thought you were a cat-burglar!"

Bill laughed guiltily and went into his room. Damn the woman. He would rather have been seen in his overcoat and bare legs by anybody other than her.

At dinner Bill realized again how far Alistair had gone from him. He had been drawn back into the circle

of his family. Bill sat on the fringe and watched them doing their tricks. He thought that here was the ideal communism, although probably Mr. and Mrs. Metcalfe would have been scandalized if they had been told that. But nevertheless, it was here: the perfect co-operation, the throwing of the ball from one to the other. To everyone but himself. They made no attempt to draw him into their conversation. He was their audience, and as such nothing was expected from him but applause. Their act was perfect. The bright balls of conversation flew from one to the other and none of them muffed a catch. Laughing dutifully at their quips, Bill wondered how often they had spoken these wisecracks and before how many different guests. They were too brilliant to be entirely spontaneous.

This was his first thought. Then, on reflection, he decided that he was doing the Metcalfes an injustice. Individually he realized that none of them was brilliant, but collectively they were. They depended upon each other for stimulation and support.

They were half-way through dinner when Peter jumped up and began to fiddle with the wireless. He pressed all the buttons, but there was nothing that satisfied him at any of the British stations. He made a face when he heard the abysmal braying of a B.B.C. symphony concert, and he cried: "Jazz, maestro, please!"

He twirled the dial and snatches of programmes from foreign stations spattered into the room like bullets from a machine-gun.

"Peter!" Mrs. Metcalfe cried. "Do get one station for my favour, and then leave it."

"Just a minute," he said. "I'll get a nice jazzy programme in a minute."

There was a blare of melancholy music. "Art thou my father!" Alan sang in a deep bass, clasping his hands together.

"Ask your mother," said a high stagy voice from another station.

There were gales of laughter from the Metcalfes. "How very appropriate." Mrs. Metcalfe wiped the tears of laughter carefully from her eyes so as not to disturb her mascara. "I think she must have heard you, Alan."

"What a family this is!" Alistair spluttered through his giggles, turning to Bill for approval.

"Here we are!" Peter cried as the strains of *The Donkey's Serenade* filled the room. "This is right up our street!"

"What a horrible expression to use," Mrs. Metcalfe said to him as he returned to the table. "It reminds me of some of the expressions that friend of yours used to use, Alistair. What was his name again? You remember, the tall fellow who spent a week-end here two or three months ago."

"Gilbert Payne."

"Yes, that was his name." Mrs. Metcalfe turned to Bill. "Do you know him, Mr. For-er-Bill?"

"Yes, he's in our year."

"Such a peculiar person," Mrs. Metcalfe said, helping herself to a peach. "He had atrocious manners."

"Who?" Alan said.

"You know," Peter said. "Gilbert the Filbert!" He screwed up his face and hunched up his left shoulder. Bill squirmed; the caricature was so perfect in its cruelty.

"Peter does it so beautifully," Mrs. Metcalfe said.

"Do show Mr. Forbes some more, darling." She turned to Bill. "He had such a peculiar way of sitting at the table. He never drew in his chair. You would have thought that the table was going to eat him or something. There were always enough crumbs at his place to feed a flock of sparrows."

Unconsciously, Bill drew in his chair a little as he watched Peter parody poor Gilbert. The nervous stutter and the clumsy waving of the hands that hid so much goodness became in Peter's mimicry something clownish, something vulgar and obscene. He glanced at Alistair to see how he was taking it, but Alistair was leaning back in his chair helpless with laughter. "That's it," he cried. "Now the sniff. Don't forget that."

"No, that's the *pièce de resistance*," Peter said, drawing his forefinger across the point of his nose and sniffing loudly. "Or as the Filbert would have said himself: That's the thing that beats the band!"

Listening to a crooner moaning *Good-bye to Summer*, Bill remembered how friendly Alistair had been with Gilbert Payne during their first year. They had been inseparable in exactly the same way as he and Alistair were now. It was Gilbert who had coached Alistair and practically shoved him through his exams. *Good-bye to summer and now good-bye to you. . . .*

"Jill Jessamy will now sing *I'm gonna lock ma heart and throw away the key*," said the announcer. "Come along, Jill, stop polishing your nails and give it the works."

"I'm gonna lock ma heart and throw away the key," Alan bellowed in time with the singer, almost drowning her tinny nasal voice.

"You should lock your mouth when you're at it," Peter said.

"You should lock Jill what-do-you-call-her's," Mrs. Metcalfe said. "She'd have been better to have kept on polishing her nails!"

"What a family!" Alistair spluttered.

Bill smiled politely. And as he kept on smiling politely all evening he was amazed at himself for being able to keep it up. He watched Peter give impersonations of various friends of the family, and he listened to Alan trying to outdo the crooners on the wireless. All this was punctuated by Alistair's giggle and Mrs. Metcalfe's catty remarks. Only the father was silent, and he was silent, Bill felt, because he had not enough brains even to be cruelly clever.

"I'm gonna sing a blue song," a husky female voice carolled.

"Oh, this should be good," Peter cried.

"Really, Peter!" Mrs. Metcalfe pretended she was shocked.

"What a family!" Alistair giggled.

Each of the Metcalfes shook hands with Bill as they said good night. Mrs. Metcalfe came into the hall.

"Good night, Mr. Forbes," she said, showing her teeth

"Bill," Alistair said.

"Good night, Bill," she said. "I always seem to forget."

"Good night," he said.

As he followed Alistair upstairs he heard a crooner singing *Remember Me*, and as he said good night, he wished that it were Monday. He wondered how he was going to get through the week-end. And as he got into bed he wondered if Peter downstairs had already started to give an impersonation of him, or if he would wait until after he was gone on Monday.

THREE PLAYS

Reviewed by HERBERT HODGE

FOR ME, SHAW is more important than Shakespeare.

I'm told by my better educated friends that this is a foolish statement, conferring no praise on Shaw and only showing up myself. They may be right. I admit I feel a fool in the company of critics. They know what's what, and I only know what I like. It's a pity, perhaps, but I can't help it. Shaw usually moves me. Shakespeare usually doesn't.

I thought I'd better mention this—in case anyone should mistake what follows for dramatic criticism. It isn't, of course. It's simply myself looking at plays.

I've just seen three: *Man and Superman*, *The Corn is Green*, and *Geneva*, in that order.

I was disappointed with the Old Vic production of *Man and Superman*. It didn't grip. That was partly the fault of my seat. I sat in the gallery. And just as the steps of a shrine become hollowed by the knees of pilgrims, so the seats of the Old Vic gallery have become worn by the bony bottoms of penurious intellectuals. One should, perhaps, be content with a backless wooden bench for one's sixpence—provided it's smooth and splinterless. But when the softer sections of the wood have been worn away so that the ridged grain bites into the sitter's flesh, it ceases to be a sixpenny seat and becomes a tanner's worth of torture.

But that's a minor detail. A smoothing plane and a little sandpaper will cure it. The real trouble was in the production. For one thing, the third act, the Hell Scene, was left out. And *Man and Superman* without the Hell Scene is a sandwich without meat. I know the play

is done more often without it than with it, but that only shows the inability of producers to distinguish between the picture frame and the picture. Acts 1, 2, and 4 are merely a few fancy frills—Anno Domini 1903—hung around that essential, immortal third.

If you conceive the Shavian Muse as an airplane it needs Acts 1 and 2 for a long take-off; in Act 3 it soars; in Act 4 it glides back to earth and is neatly wheeled into its hanger. When there is no third act there is no flight. Pilot Shaw shouldn't allow the public to be disappointed like this. He should offer producers the choice of all or nothing. The excuse that the complete play is too long is not theatrically valid. Either we want Shaw or we don't.

That said, it seems unfair to criticize what was left. The actors did their best to make it convincing as a naturalistic farce in modern dress. (Incidentally, the 1938 super-charged Sports model completely killed Henry Straker.) To my mind, it would have been better done as a "period" play in an impressionistic setting. It's just a thought. I may be wrong. But I'd like to see a producer experiment with it one of these days.

At the Duchess, *The Corn is Green* was a delight. Of course, a soft, roomy seat—at seventeen times the Old Vic price—permitted the soul to be more susceptible. But the play is exquisite. There is neither flaw nor blemish. It is perfectly written, perfectly acted, perfectly produced. All its perfect parts move and reciprocate in grooves of polished steel—piston, cylinder, con-rod, and crankshaft—to provide an evening for the connoisseur.

Emlyn Williams was sympathetic as the young miner; Sybil Thorndike gave a good performance as the elderly

spinster who takes him out of the mine to make an educated man of him; Kathleen Harrison was a life-like cockney servant—a rare achievement on the London stage; and Christine Silver was perfect in the stock part of comic spinster. So was John Glyn-Jones as a solicitor's clerk with religion.

But the whole cast was good. The most striking performance of the evening, I think, was that of Betty Jardine as Bessie Watty. She begins as a whining, sweet-stuffing schoolgirl, and grows through her peevish teens to flirtish adolescence and, finally, to complete womanhood, all within the short space of the play. It's a magnificent bit of acting.

But with all its perfection, I don't think *The Corn is Green* is a great play—nor even an important one. It is simply—I won't say merely—perfect entertainment. Perhaps it's too perfect to be great. Soul and technique so seldom blend, and great works usually have ragged edges.

Perhaps, one of these days, Life will oblige Emlyn Williams by thwarting him, and he'll write in rage and pity. If, then, he can still apply his spit and polish, what a play that will be!

Shaw's *Geneva*, at the Saville, seems amateurish by comparison. The construction is rough, the production slipshod, and the acting sometimes downright bad.

I took a film critic with me to give him a treat. Half-way through the first act, he said: "The trouble is, films have spoiled me for the theatre. I've come to expect good acting as a matter of course."

All the same, *Geneva* has a greatness that *The Corn is Green* lacks. It touches the spot, quickens the heart. It's urgent, important, contemporary.

Shaw had a great idea—that of summoning the dictators to trial before an international court. But he seems to have tired of his idea just as the development reached its climax. He has yawned, fiddled with it, and finally flung it aside. *Geneva* is unfinished—a fragment.

He apparently feels this himself. Hence his defensively apologetic programme-note. The stage-play, he says, does not finish ; it only stops. How the present European situation will finish, nobody knows. “The utmost I or any other playwright can do is to extract comedy or tragedy from the present situation and wait and see what will become of it.”

Here, it seems to me, he is evading the issue by confusing drama and life. The fact that the playwright cannot solve the political problem is no reason for refusing to solve his stage problem. “I am,” pleads Shaw, “neither Omniscient nor Omnipotent.” But he is—on his stage.

The production is amazingly uneven. During the first act it is difficult to believe one is watching professional actors. With the exception of Alison Leggatt, whose performance as Begonia Brown of Camberwell is excellent, they mangle their lines so self-consciously that one almost sweats in sympathetic embarrassment. The telepathic message runs : “This bloke Shaw’s rather awful—and we haven’t the faintest idea what he means—but this is what he wrote, so we’ve got to say it.”

Act 2 is a little better ; but not until the judge, Alexander Knox, enters. In Act 3, it really comes to life. Ernest Thesiger takes hold on his part of British Foreign Secretary, Cecil Trouncer is tremendous as

Bombardone, Walter Hudd convincing as Battler, and and even the small-part players suddenly take courage and speak up.

Unfortunately, Shaw himself lets down the third act. It's great stuff in its great moments. But it neither finishes nor stops. It just fizzles out—following a rumour that the world's coming to an end.

But even a fragment of a mirror is better than none at all, and the modern theatrical mirror is so seldom held up to anything that matters. *Geneva* should not be missed. Its qualities more than balance its defects. It succeeds in spite of itself.

On the night I went, we might have been at an election meeting by the way members of the audience interrupted with "Hear ! Hear !" And, say what you like about the later Shaw, you won't find many West-End plays stirring up an audience like that.

MICROFILM

By KENNETH WESTON

IN THE TWENTIETH century it is usually hard to imagine a world without printing. Each year many thousands of books and journals in this country alone disseminate words and pictures in vast quantities. The presses produce volumes covering all the countless manifestations of human thought, ingenuity and creativeness.

Yet with all the speeding-up and facilitation of travel and verbal contact that has taken place during the last decades, the communication of the written word and printed image is still far from perfect. There are times when conditions still approach the medieval. A piece of research is held up because certain data are only to be found in a rare book, a manuscript or a thesis shut away in some place remote from the worker who requires it.

There are two very unsatisfactory aspects to publishing at present ; that is to say, from the reader's point of view—a publisher would probably say there were more from his. In the first place, such books as are published on subjects that promise only a small sale, appear at a high price ; in the second, a vast amount of material is never published at all, because no publisher finds it worth his while. Yet the possession of data so withheld might ultimately result in some practical contribution to human welfare or some enrichment of culture. In days of specialization, progress is more than ever dependent on a few men. It is they who devise things that are beneficial to thousands. The quantitative demand for any particular data is no indication of its importance.

The methods of present-day publishing are good

where the demand is good. The printed book, in small quantities, is the most convenient form for storing information in such a way that it is easy to get at. Two things are required: a means of producing from one to any number of copies of a document (to use the vaguest and most inclusive word) easily, quickly, and cheaply; and a solution to the storage problem that confronts any large library or deposit of archives.

A medium that answers both these requirements has been devised. It is well known in America; less well known in this country—a lagging both typical and regrettable.

One of the many inanities of the last century was the insertion in penholders and like objects of pictures slightly larger than a pin-head, to be viewed through a magnifier. In the Franco-Prussian War, pigeons carried tiny photographs of messages from Tours to Paris. After the Great War, still-cameras taking 35 mm. cine-film were developed. In 1927, the American Library of Congress was faced with a Rockefeller Grant, the task of making copies of all documents relating to American History in other parts of the world, and the very great problem, at the time, of how to do it.

When the Director of the project discovered the camera that the Parisian optician Lemare had devised, his problem, and the whole problem of the much needed supplementation of publishing as then conceived, was solved. All that remained was the perfection of apparatus and the building-up of machinery for distribution.

The new method is very simple. For many years it has been possible to obtain from libraries photographs of manuscripts and of pages from the books they possess. Other methods have been developed—photostats, rotographs, photo-lithographs have been available. But

they all had the disadvantage of not being cheap enough for many of the people that needed to make use of them. If there was much material to be examined before what was sought could be found, the price was prohibitive. Microphotography, however, includes cheapness as one among its many advantages.

The document is photographed in the ordinary way, but by a camera taking—at the present stage—35 mm. film. An octavo book of 500 pages can be recorded in this way on 16 feet of film. The roll of film thus obtained, or a positive print taken from it, can then be inserted in a projector or a specially constructed “reader”, which will give an image equal in size or larger than that of the original document. With good quality film, nothing is lost in clarity or detail. For display, or for reproduction in a publication at a later date, a photograph can be taken from it in the usual way. It has been found practicable to supply such films at a cost as low as $3\frac{1}{2}$ cents per image.

It is obvious that the reduction of bulk involved is enormous. Your octavo book of 500 pages becomes a roll of film 35 mm. deep and little more in diameter. This not only solves storage problems, but makes possible the keeping of records that in the past could not be contemplated, both from the point of view of the copying involved and the space they would take. In the past, it has been impossible for any one library to contain copies of the catalogues of all the other major libraries of the world—yet such a unification of all the dumps of knowledge is obviously desirable. On microfilm such a collection would be possible, and would probably take far less space than the present catalogue of, say, the British Museum. That is, using 35 mm. film ;

in time it is hoped to make use of still smaller images, so that the average book could be reduced to the size of its card in the index. Large firms were not slow to realize that a solution had been found to the problem of the ever-increasing growth of their files.

The student, the scientist, the *musicologue*, the digger into the culture and history of the past, need no longer be faced with the annoying situation that there in Paris, or Milan, or Philadelphia is lying the data he requires, and possibly more heaven knows where. He need no longer be dependent on being in the same place as the documents he wants to study. Libraries cannot send their contents to whoever wants them; they can, however, supply a small roll of film, which, as it stands or cut into convenient lengths, can come through the post with far less risk of damage than a bound book. This then becomes the property of the applicant; the original can be restored to its shelf at once, unaffected.

To return to the Library of Congress and the Lemare Camera. In 1932 one of the cameras came to the Library itself, and copies were supplied to the public at 3 cents per negative. Soon afterwards, apparatus was set up in other Government Libraries.

At that time, one was dependent on a home-made hook-up for reading purposes. Since then, developments have been made by a number of firms both in reading-apparatus and cameras. To-day it is possible to film at the rate of up to 10,000 pages a day, the operation being almost automatic. It is still possible to rig up a reader for yourself, if you have to, out of the remains of a magic-lantern or a cinematograph, but compact and well-made reading equipment can be obtained from about £30.

Progress. In 1936 the Libraries of most of the big American Universities were equipped with microfilm apparatus. The monthly bound editions of a number of newspapers—previously bulky and expensive—appeared as rolls of film. Edward Brothers Inc. were busy in the British Museum making complete photo-records of all English printed books produced before 1550, for use in America. The same firm was able to supply films made in at least seven of the Continental Libraries, at the same cost as those made in England or America—3½ cents per image—even if the particular customer was the only one requiring a copy.

During the following year all branches of the work developed, both as regards the amount of photography done, and the number of newspapers, libraries, etc., covered. The New York branch of the Oxford University Press announced that in future all books marked out-of-print in their catalogues would be obtainable on microfilm.

The more use that is made of microphotography, the more one realizes its advantages, and the manifold uses to which it can be put. As we have already seen, it saves space, and to a great extent destroys the disadvantages of having the archives of the world scattered in hundreds of libraries. It is no longer fatal if you are a thousand miles away from the place where your data lies. Such materials as can be found near by need no longer be studied exclusively within the walls of the library, and the necessary parts of it laboriously copied. Further, it enables groups of workers to collect together a greater mass of materials than has ever been possible—this is particularly useful in the social sciences. *Musicologues* can rout out many of the manuscripts of

known and forgotten composers, and rediscover works that have been forgotten not through their own lack of quality, but the taste of intervening times. Many of the questions that surround the earliest European music we possess, may be answered with the easier access to the manuscripts.

So much for materials of the past. Microphotography does not look only backwards. Records of newspapers, important from the historical point of view, besides being cheaper and more convenient to handle and store in quantities, would be more durable. The film generally used for the cinema dries and cracks; film with a "safety" base is very different in this respect, and is certainly longer lasting than the average newspaper, and is not liable to become dog-eared. Preservation in another sense is also afforded: a few films made in Spanish libraries before the war are now the only copies of the documents in existence. Though the originals are destroyed, any number of film copies can be made, and full-size photographic facsimiles published.

An ingenious use of the medium is being made by Science Service of Washington. Copies of scientific theses and articles are lodged with them. The scientific journals that would normally be faced with the problem of selecting a few of them and publishing them in full, can now print them in an abbreviated form, with a footnote to the effect that the rest of the treatise can be obtained on film for so much from Science Service. This is invaluable where the subject matter is of interest to a very limited number of workers.

So far I have spoken only of American activity. This is unavoidable as things stand at present. Microphotography is not, however, unknown in this country.

Some British business firms have installed the equipment. The British Museum can supply microfilm copies at a price slightly higher than the American. In 1936 the Institute of Historical Research appointed a committee to examine the whole question. Their very full report advocates the founding of a central organization in this country. They are naturally primarily interested in the medium for use on historical archives and the like. A difficulty that can easily be foreseen in the planning of such an organization is that of the co-ordination of the various interests to make it possible.

What has to be envisaged is something on the American model but larger in its scope. There must be an organization that has representatives in all the important libraries of the world, and that has the resources to build up a complete index to cover them all. This itself is a work of an enormous size, yet of enormous importance. Not only is it necessary that it should be able to supply whatever is required, but it is also clearly the central point at which information regarding the scattered masses of material should be gathered together.

It is something that cannot be built up in a year. It must be conceived on a large scale—not as a publishing house with a difference—but as something that will be a world-library, making the existing libraries take on the proportions that a medieval monastery had in comparison with them. Just as the modern libraries grew up as a result of the growth of printing, so in time, microphotography should produce this all-embracing library. It is no exaggeration to say that for knowledge and culture, it is the most important invention since the printing-press. Its appearance is long overdue.

FACES AND FACTS

By ROBERT HERRING

WERE MOVIES PROPERLY conducted, the part played in them by actors would be that of masks. Symbolic, stylized, expressive. Movies are not properly conducted and so the faces of film stars have become masks in the other sense of covering and hiding. In consequence, the time arrives when it no longer means so much in a film to have certain big-name players. For myself I can no longer "see" Joan Crawford, Lionel Barrymore, Cesare Romero, Loretta Young, Don Ameche, Cary Grant, any more. Other people may feel the same about Loy, H. B. Warner, Joan Bennett.

For this reason the cry goes up now and again for new faces. But what is the use of a new face if it is the only one you see? Catching up, after a holiday, with the autumn movies, I seemed to be confronted in every picture with Tyrone Power. He is a young man against whom, as an actor, I have nothing; except that he rarely seems suitable for the roles in which he is cast; but the result of meeting him in every movie was that after intensive film-going I felt at the end that I had only seen one talkie, and that that was called *Antoinette's Ragtime Suez-cide*.

Tagged on to so many talkies, Tyrone Power's face and presence lost any expressiveness. One knows that the scripts of several films call for certain situations. Like a prescribing chemist reaching for his bottles, the makers reach for their players. Prescription says marrying-mannequin—Joan Crawford presented; young lover indicated—Tyrone Power picked. The familiar

faces through long familiarity become masks that get in the way. The emotions of the drama are hidden. The film may be comedy or tragedy, these masks have become so set, they mean, where they mean anything, so many things that have nothing to do with the film in question, that we can no longer "see" that film or get from it what is supposed to be there.

This is one of the weaknesses of fiction-films—the identifying of certain stars with certain stock situations and the stultifying of situations to suit stars. It is a point on which the fact-film ought to win hand over fist against the fiction-film. But it doesn't. Starting with the two Maginot Line news-reels, I have had lately a good diet of documentaries, and the result was that instead of being bewildered by features, I was numbed with facts. Instead of thinking every film was a Power picture, merely dressed differently, I went round saying to myself, "The green plover lays thirty-five million eggs which are looked after by three-quarter of a million miners working in the Maginot Line whilst every one of their wives is paying so-many so-many pounds in hire purchase, as the tides in the Indian Ocean do this or that."

The trouble with documentary films is that their facts so often cancel out. I saw a film extolling the uses of coal, dwelling on its importance in British industry glamourizing (as you might say) Glamorganshire (except that, as Grierson's name got a credit, the miners shown were Scots).

In the same programme was another short, called *The Smoke Menace*. This deprecated the use of raw coal. It showed us awful scenes of smoky cities, of

buildings crumbling and washing blackening. The commentator staggered us with statistics of the amount of soot which fell annually on London. He told us how soot causes fog and that in Manchester the death-rate rises in foggy weather. Industry was slowed down by the use of raw coal. Workers lost efficiency—by the use of raw coal. One became a public enemy—by using raw coal in open grates.

One ought to use gas, of course. One knew that was coming (it was a Gas, Light, and Coke film), so one could take that in whichever way one felt inclined. One might have felt inclined to think a case could be made out against gas—the dangers of leakage, of explosion, and the fact that many more people have put their heads in gas-ovens than have deliberately roasted themselves in open fires. But the point was that when the coal film was shown after, people laughed. Coal was the big bad Wolf. If the coal film had been shown first, the result might have been different.

Similarly, it is not a good idea to run *The Development of a Chick* with *The Green Plover* (both Gaumont-British). The plover seems such a scatter-brained bird by comparison, that one's attention is diverted from what is in the film. One is wondering *why* it is so foolish, so flibberty, one is thinking of the ordinary hen—thinking more of that film than of the plover one is seeing. And in that, wanting to know other things rather than listening to what is being told.

Even more destructive is the use of library-shots for films of unrelated, if not actually opposed, subjects. On one occasion, when a fact-film came on, a friend who was with me exclaimed, "I have seen that shot before." The film progressed. "And that—and that—

those shots are in the film made for *our* firm—it's *quite* a different subject." By using these library stock-shots, the various film units are turning their facts into masks, just as their bigger brothers have done with faces.

The remedy for both the cancelling-out of shorts and the use of stock scenes is, of course, co-ordination. It is easy to say "of course". But it is not, it never has been, easy to co-ordinate in the film-industry. A step in the right direction is being taken by a new body, called the Left Book Club Film Group. As we go to press before the initial meeting, I am not sure whether the accent is on books (read or to be read by film-makers) or films (to be seen by book-readers). But the aim is to provide a focal group where those so diversely employed in and by films—technicians, scenarists, critics—can meet, exchange views, air grievances, share information. To take criticism, the side with which I am most familiar. One of a critic's difficulties is to know to whom the credit of a good film is due; this is not invariably to be gauged by the type-size of the credit-titles. Another is to know and apportion the blame for a bad film—and to balance that blame with some knowledge of the difficulties met, the obstacles overcome, and interference suffered at any one stage in the making.

If this group can assist those engaged, however variously, in the movie-madness, it will have justified its claim on our crowded schedules. In time it may be able to prevent overlapping of shorts and scenes. Till that *can* be prevented, the fact-film falls victim to the thousand ills of the flesh one's heir to, which is bad for both, but worse for audiences who from either have too much of figures thrown at them.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

HIGH STREET. J. M. RICHARDS and ERIC RAVILIOUS.
Country Life. 7s. 6d.

AS SCHOOLCHILDREN, PASSING sweetshops whose windows in November would suddenly become full of squibs and Catherine Wheels instead of cokernut chips and licorice all-sorts ; as adolescents, passing, according to our taste, saddlers and shirtmakers, whose wares we could not afford ; and as anything we have since chosen to be or find we have become, shops have their spell. And if shops, what more than a street of shops—high street ?

The authors of this book have had that idea ; the writer makes the pleasant point that “ what makes a shop window exciting is the quantity of goods . . . the happy effect of crowds of the same things, arranged in rows on shelves and gay with the colours of their own packages and bottles”. The artist follows suit with pictures which, in their own style, leave nothing to be said. But neither artist nor author play fair. “ High Street ” does not imply the West End of London. If it does, why give us Hoopers, of St. James’s, and Cadbury and Pratt’s (the reference to whose so hygienically challenging cat among the hams is particularly delightful), but not Locks, or that barber behind His Majesty’s or Cattini’s in Buckingham Palace Road, or any other more-than fried-fish-shop café ? The authors give us an amusement saloon, but not a milk bar—and if we have to be modern, aren’t twelve-hour cleaners worth recording ? You may say, and they may say, that their aim was to be representative. Heaven forbid their

publisher from saying the same thing, for then there may not be another book. It is essential there should be—this is so much better than the dreary cross-cut camera catalogues which are our age's daguerreotype. But the authors haven't made up their minds. They give us the rational, the components of "high street"—baker, saddler, cheesemonger, undertaker, butcher. Then they have their joke; they slip in Wedding Cakes (Buszards), Fire Engineers, Letter Makers, Theatrical Properties, the Plumassier of Park Road, Submarine Engineers and Clerical Outfitters (which "has one advantage over other shops; it can give any amount of credit as a clergyman can always be traced and so can never get away without paying"). Jokes are fine, and there is wit in every line of these drawings as well as in much of the studied simplicity of the text. But if we're going to be esoteric, I wonder why not such shops as those that specialize in glass lustres, medical specimens, sports requisites? Basset Lowke's model-ship shop is represented, but not Goldston's Magic Emporium practically opposite.

And if we're going to be "High Street", where is the draper with lengths of lace licked on the window with stamp-paper, the tobacconist, the shop which, starting as cyclist, has ended as radio? Where is the greengrocer, that horror, the gilder and framer, the filling station, the barber (if stick to London we must, has any shop offered such chance to either author or artist as Evan Williams in Oxford Street?)? We are given knife-grinder, but no chestnut vendor, and the decor made by that ambulant Autolycus, the street magazine seller, is unnoticed. Not that I mind. I mention these as further incentives to those I would alone trust with the subjects.

But next time, I would wish they would either both keep to the subject in hand and their jokes to themselves, or not and let us in on them. Which means enlarging their scope. Which depends on the publishers. The temper of whom depends on the public. To whom I would suggest that to each two copies of this are necessary—one for oneself; one to replace the copy so certainly stolen. And then, of course, one to send away.

H. K. FISHER

AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHS. WALKER EVANS.

The Museum of Modern Art, New York. \$2.50.

A GREAT DEAL OF bad work is being produced by good writers on account of conscience. They are driven, by a hatred of the things they see and experience, to propaganda. Then the trouble is that they work with the conscious mind and not with a harmony of conscious and unconscious. *The Ascent of F6* showed the dangers of "what must be done", revealed a curious mysticism of leadership, something really, entirely fascist. *Necessary* propaganda is best left out of the arts—which deal with other truths—to the camera. Say what the disciples may, a camera is a machine in a way in which canvas, brushes, and palette are not a machine; and the best photos are those which look as if they have been taken by the machine on its own. Walker Evans's pictures, taken dead on, pile facts on facts. They are anti-art-photographic: particulars for the universal, one face and one street to represent every face and street in that world.

There is no Demon-Unconscious to mitigate the propaganda of this album of American photographs

which might have been taken by the unaided machine. A scribble on a window pane, a fallen tree across a grandiloquent vista, a note on a pillar, the juxtaposition of posters and showcards, such things tell of disintegration objectively.

OSWELL BLAKESTON

PEOPLE ARE CURIOUS. JAMES HANLEY. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

PEOPLE CALL MR. HANLEY a realist, but actually I believe his stories are often most effective when they are at their least "real". *From Five Till Six*, for example, the finest story in this uneven collection, is full of lengthy speeches, the characters can talk in metaphors and they possess a sustained energy, a fanaticism almost, that is extremely rare in the real life that most of us know and read about. But the frenzied utterance of these strange characters gives the story a touch of greatness. With the small event treated with little heightening he is less successful—I am thinking of such a piece as *The Lamb*, but when he has to deal with characters half crazy with loneliness or anxiety or animal fatigue he writes with power and distinction.

GLYN JONES

NINA LESSING. EDWARD CRANKSHAW. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

THIS IS NOT a story but a study : of a young ballerina's psychoses, done unobtrusively and perhaps somewhat dryly—dry in the sense that one speaks of an over-careful handling of paint. Nina's self-revelation makes a

picture that is never harsh, always rhythmical, but not, on the whole, compelling.

From the firelit scene in the prologue where she sets the tone of her conviction, saying to her guardian that probably she *can* "have it both ways", the picture moves backwards and forwards over her childhood and the affair with Richard Sturmer, obscure composer of her new ballet. She insists upon an equilibrium in her own life being like that of her dancing—liberty within an element of her own creation. Such liberty fails her, naturally, as soon as the element is violated; and that is what happens when Sturmer forces upon her music that she cannot understand and cannot cope with. That she is in love with him is not in itself the point.

Mr. Crankshaw uses the syntactical manner of James: for instance: "At any rate, in the months of her emergence as, so to speak, the perfect imago, she dedicated what of her life was not passed between the somewhat hectic ardours of the theatre and the appalling disillusion of a plundered, famine-struck society, increasingly to domestic pleasures." This was Vienna after the war. But James' particular subcutaneous world was essentially one which had its culminating tragedy in the war, and the question is whether one may speak in the same terms of essentially different tragedies. It looks as if the pressure of language forms upon the forms of thought is too much for Nina's development; it looks, namely, as if her solution were largely a necessity of literary style.

It is a style which allows slow-motion gestures to disengage like particles of frost under a microscope. The result is behaviour, and not necessarily life. That is not to say that Nina's problem is a slight one, but only

that Mr. Crankshaw does not quite make the grade. Whether he does so the next time is worth looking out for.

EITHNE WILKINS

THROUGH FRENCH WINDOWS. DAVID HORNER.
Macmillan. 8s. 6d.

MR. HORNER IS one of those pleasant Englishmen who enjoys wandering through a countryside, stopping when he finds a comfortable hotel with a good restaurant and a bit of Romanesque architecture round the corner. No one has ever been able satisfactorily to explain the fascination France has for foreigners: it cannot be only because the proportion of good hotels, restaurants and Romanesque architecture is likely to be greater there than elsewhere: but it is pleasant to find someone who feels so at home in one of the few civilized countries left to us. He shows his wisdom by consulting not Baedeker but taxi-drivers to point out the best places in which to eat the best food. One wishes he had sometimes broken his own rule of not divulging the names of the restaurants where so often he ate and drank the right things; but he made the rule for the best of all possible reasons, that restaurants are liable to change hands. He trusts to his own good taste to discover the churches and pictures and people of interest in any out-of-the-way place he may be in, and it is trustworthy.

The second half of this book is an account of a summer spent with a bourgeois family in a small provincial town. He describes with humour and understanding the close-knit circle, the tea-parties, the gossip, the intrigue. When the summer is over, one is as sorry as Mr. Horner to leave "Valentigny". CARINA LANG

HISTORY

MEDIEVAL PANORAMA. G. G. COULTON. Cambridge University Press. 15s.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to be impersonal, and to detach entirely this latest book of Dr. Coulton's from his earlier volumes. He refers to it as a "scaffolding" which he "would have been very glad to find before him fifty years ago". Twenty years ago some of his earlier work was scaffolding from which we learnt how to see the medieval village and woods stretching back behind our own, not grey and ghost-haunted but as a lively jewel-coloured jungle, full of animals and birds. His latest book *Medieval Panorama* must obviously reach a much larger public and we earlier students feel absurdly as if we were lending his new readers a very revered and valued uncle.

We hope they will appreciate this. Perhaps absurd, but somehow Dr. Coulton will always be claimed by the young of all ages. He shares that lusty thirst of youth which will slake itself only at the source. And if, having drunk so deep at the fountain head it becomes slightly drunk, that is also a characteristic of youth, which Dr. Coulton will firmly and sternly correct with cold, hard facts.

He inspires confidence. He will never spoon-feed his readers with pre-digested generalities, but encourage our healthy desire to hunt for ourselves, and even greater desire to think for ourselves.

Turning these sturdy pages, you can always hear a crackle of the ancient parchment. Youth is essentially honest and likes that. It demands reality. It wants to put its finger into the mason marks of the stone, smell the

beech mast and the pigs, take aeroplane and look down, through to the medieval fields and hut-rings green below.

DOROTHY HARTLEY

MATERIAL OF ENGLISH HISTORY. F. J. WEAVER. Discussion Books. Nelson. 2s.

WE BELIEVE PROFESSOR Weaver has been a school-master himself. Certainly every teacher of history should have this book, which should be valuable to all who teach History. In the first chapter they are asked why they do so. (Surprisingly few know their own answer.) Subsequent chapters give clear directions how and where it is possible to study. It is altogether an excellent handbook, closely packed with information and most useful references.

DOROTHY HARTLEY

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH: ARCHITECT AND DRAMATIST, 1664-1726. LAURENCE WHISTLER. Cobden-Sanderson. 21s.

THIS FULL SIZE portrait holds more than an architectural interest in 1938 when each country is rapidly digging itself into the narrow trench of nationalism. Here is the product of mixed heredity, a wide education, and a full life. "The denying spirit of the English," to quote Mr. Whistler's phrase—that devastating trait of censoring, paring down, suppressing enterprise as well as excess—has had an ineradicable effect on our national architecture; we have generally had happier results in small architectural essays than in the expression of large

concepts. Certain creative Englishmen have been notable exceptions to compromise, and Mr. Whistler has detailed the brilliant course of the *amateur* who absorbed life and recreated it as dramatist in bold plays of exuberance and wit, as architect in buildings of "... some grandeur, some audacity, quite new in English architecture".

Vanbrugh—of Dutch-English parentage—began his adult life as a soldier but left this calling when his regiment was threatened with a garrison life in Guernsey. On an accusation of being a spy (England and France being at war) he was imprisoned in the Bastille for eighteen months, where he diluted the hours of boredom with a first excursion into play-writing, and discovered a gift for characterization and a channel for the gusto of a man of the world. From the first he gathered an increasing circle of friends who delighted in his company, and formed an enthusiastic audience of his plays when they were staged. The full-blooded qualities which packed the theatre also drew down the wrath of the "denying" ones, and, such was the strength of the arbiters of Society, even Vanbrugh—an entertainer first and last—excused his vitality in phrases suggesting that on the stage the audience saw what it should not do. Part strongly inclined, in the true spirit of Renaissance non-specialization, part driven, no doubt, he ventured into what he perhaps hoped would be a profession less open to exacting criticism, and in 1699 at the age of thirty-five, he embarked on his first architectural essay, Castle Howard.

The bulk of the story is the exact, witty, and human documentation of a man of great audacity, cynical, coarse, but withal "a sweet-natured gentleman", who effected many adventures in stone, and fought bitter

battles, ranging from the changes in contemporary taste to the fierce parsimony of clients and the harangue of the law. The hair's breadth exactness, the fine essence of classical architecture, was never Vanbrugh's way, but the demand of architecture as an art was his governing tyrant, to bow to no client or compromise.

This model for biographies, written in English which is in itself a delight to read, is a child of great care and delight, and gives for the first time a composite perspective of the whole life of this gifted artist. In Mr. Whistler's words: "... Vanbrugh ... may well have been content looking back on a life of many pleasures, singularly full and fruitful, though not altogether fortunate, though indeed charged with misfortunes. For in a world where the elements destroy fast enough by themselves, even when the greater part of mankind is not entirely bent on destruction, those men are great who by creating in every age contrive to hold the balance, and win back territory from the ruinous tide."

JOANNA MACFADYEN

OLD ENGLISH CUSTOMS. F. J. DRAKE-CORNELL.
Illustrated. Batsford. 7s. 6d.

IN 1722, a ship sank off Dunster with all hands. Only a dead cow was washed ashore. Since then, the Minehead hobby-horse has been made in the form of a ship, with a cow's tail attached. That is the kind of anecdote which opens avenues of appreciation. As does this, in a different kind; the Dean of Westminster alone has jurisdiction over Westminster Abbey, but at coronations he surrenders it to a layman and a Catholic (the Earl

Marshal, the Duke of Norfolk). Yet these, and most of the rest with which this book is filled, remain anecdotes. I cannot say why. The familiar and the unfamiliar are here. Not only country customs, such as Helston's Floral Dance, Lyndhurst's Court of Swainmote, are chronicled; those of town, church, law, and army are tabulated and illustrated in the Batsford manner. With so much ground covered, it seems ungenerous to complain that an opportunity seems to have been missed. But I found that a book from which I was prepared to excavate turned out to be one I only dip into—winning not so much correlated customs as anecdotes . . . the Cameronians sit for the King's Health, Ely Place has its own watchman, Barrow-in-Furness two ale-tasters, the Sovereign may not enter the Commons, etc. In these days of *Picture Posts* and Time marching on, can it be that one needs something more? No longer the *Golden Bough*, since these give the leaf, but the tree, root and all?

TREVOR JAMES

THE GOVERNMENT OF MANKIND. J. A. SPENDER. Cassell. 12s. 6d.

IT IS MR. SPENDER'S contention that government is "the most difficult and complicated of all the human arts". He rejects the belief that there can be a science of government. "If there were such a science, nothing would remain for the rest of us but to discover those who were versed in it and place ourselves unreservedly in their hands." But it is difficult to see why precisely the same thing should not be said of government as an art. There

is no reason to suppose that belief in an art of government will necessarily be allied to a belief in democracy and liberty. In this art there will be the technique and the purpose which the technique subserves. The important question is whether any government ought to impose its conception of the good life and force men to behave as it thinks they ought. Political philosophers framing the ideal state have, as Mr. Spender shows, too often made it into a school or a barracks. In practice, the state has never been a neutral power refereeing between conflicting interests, but has been on one of the sides making the rules.

Mr. Spender says little about methods of government. Instead he discusses the various conceptions of the nature and purpose of the state which have been held since the beginning of man's history. He examines the structure of society in ancient Egypt and Babylonia, reviews the leading ideas of the great Greek thinkers and shows some of the effects upon political institutions of the rise of Christianity. In the modern period he discusses the chief European political thinkers and the development of Parliamentary government in England. His survey ends with an examination of the ideas underlying Communism and Fascism, which he finds equally distasteful. He is unjust to Socialism in holding it to be incompatible with freedom. If that human docility which Mr. Herbert Read has called the most disturbing thing in the world could once be overcome so that men might make themselves the masters of their machines, they would be free as never before. There would occur that revolution "in the name of life" for which D. H. Lawrence hoped.

R. F. F. SUMMERS

LIVES—MEN AND WOMEN

MY SEVENTY YEARS. MRS. GEORGE BLACK. As told to Elizabeth Bailey Price. Nelson. 8s. 6d.

MRS. GEORGE BLACK is seventy and proud of it. She is proud of it for 315 pages of rather hurried autobiography. And she has every reason to be, for it is not everyone who starts a new career at that age. She has enjoyed her life immensely and one feels she has enjoyed telling Miss Price about it: Chicago in the 90's, the walk over the Chilkoot Pass from the United States into Canada, Klondyke during the Gold Rush, her life as wife of the Commissioner for the Yukon, the War years in London, and the decision to stand at the age of 70 as M.P. for the Yukon and the terrific task this involved of electioneering over territory 200,000 miles square. She loves parties and keeping open house, being chatelaine of Government House, meeting titles, collecting wild flowers, loving everyone and being loved in return. She tells it all with an almost childlike enjoyment, until nearly everyone is calling her Mother; and if she enjoys the telling a little more than her readers are likely to do, it is not for any lack of enthusiasm on her part.

CARINA LANG

I MARRIED A GERMAN. MADELEINE KENT. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

EVER SINCE THE first politically-minded German emigrés reached this country they have endeavoured to bring home to their English friends that the Germany these Englishmen loved had ceased to exist. More often than not their words merely caused benevolent smiles: "You Germans always exaggerate by taking everything

so seriously!" Now a young Englishwoman joins those warning voices and speaks of her experiences in the years 1931-6 when she and her German husband were living in the outskirts of Dresden. He was a teacher and a lecturer for Social Democratic organizations, she a journalist who gave English lessons and tried in other ways to earn some money after her husband had been dismissed. Her shrewd, truthful, and completely unsentimental account should finally enlighten those who have only recently begun to understand that the Nazi mentality is a danger to the rest of the world. There is method in Nazi madness. Yet many of the characteristics she criticizes as typically German could also be found elsewhere. Nations, like individuals, are composed of good and bad elements. Make the swaggering brute the prototype of a nation and the country will suddenly be transformed into a madhouse. Tell a people to behave decently and support and reward those who respond and there is hope that things may improve. If we let that thought slip from our minds we might as well commit suicide here and now.

LILO LINKE

D. H. LAWRENCE. HUGH KINGSMILL. Methuen.
10s. 6d.

IT SEEMS TO me that the only justifiable book still to be written about Lawrence is one treating him as an artist. For E. J. and Knud Merrild Lawrence was a vivid personality, for Murry and Mabel Luhan an incipient Messiah, but no one has yet undertaken at length the intricate and necessary job of examining Lawrence's poems and novels as pieces of literature, relegating prophecy,

doctrine and character to positions of minor importance. Mr. Kingsmill certainly has not attempted the task. Instead, with the letters, the novels, and the poems before him, Lawrence's biography in triplicate, he bakes the same bread all over again, and adds very little to our understanding of Lawrence in the process.

Of course it is impossible to relate a story such as Lawrence's without encountering the necessity for moral and literary judgments, and Mr. Kingsmill's narrative does include a certain amount of criticism, most of which is intended to be destructive. But certain hints scattered through his book, such as his references to the *White Peacock*, and his passage with Peter Warlock over the Lawrence poem, and his pert references to the characters in the novels and stories, make one wonder why he should have undertaken to act as interpreter on behalf of a writer towards whom he appears to feel some fundamental antipathy. I think the existence of this antipathy, or at least of some serious limitation on Mr. Kingsmill's part, is clearly shown by his quotations, whose only virtue is their copiousness. Very little impression is to be gathered from them of the sheer *writing* of which Lawrence was capable. Not one of the poignant and lovely poems Lawrence wrote at the time of his mother's death is quoted or referred to (we have here a piece of hacked prose instead), there is no mention of *Snapdragon*, or *Piano*, or *Hymn to Priapus*, or *Ballad of a wilful woman*, or *Love on the Farm*; and no prose of the excellence of the desert scene in *St. Mawr* is quoted, or any part of *The Prussian Officer*, or *The Blind Man*, or *Jimmy and the Desperate Woman*. Lawrence gets far less than his due in this important matter of quotation, merely, I believe, through

Mr. Kingsmill's inability to see what is valuable in his writing.

Obviously the only thing that matters to us now concerning Lawrence is the fact that he was an artist. Whether or not he shouted at Frieda or abused Eddie Marsh is of no importance at all in comparison. And Mr. Kingsmill's book leaves the position of Lawrence the artist precisely where it was.

GLYN JONES

DANGER IS MY BUSINESS. JOHN D. CRAIG.
Barker. 12s. 6d.

THE AUTHOR IS a free-lance cinematographer who works under tropic waters. He thinks up something pretty, dives to put it in the box, which is then sent to Hollywood. It's all very odd, because the real dangers of his job are not part of his pictures. For instance, one of the company set up three cameras beneath the ocean to take some nice scenic shots of a wreck. Enter, unannounced, the manta ray—the sea-bat with a mouth that will admit two men. Exit one cameraman. Had the intention been to photograph manta ray devouring film boy, one could understand the fuss and the big money from Hollywood. But a scenic of a wreck could surely be done in a tank that would stand on top of an office desk. And, from what Mr. Craig says of the limited movements of divers at work (etcetera), one would think that pictures of divers opening treasure chests would be the easiest things in this wet world to fake far away from sharks who try to spoil the picture and the operator. But no, life is not like that. The men in Hollywood are too busy building in the studio an exact replica of the street

around the corner, and Mr. Craig carries on amid the grey smoke that is blood beneath the sea.

OSWELL BLAKESTON

LIVES—BIRDS AND BEASTS

I KNOW AN ISLAND. R. M. LOCKLEY. Illustrated.
Harrap. 10s. 6d.

LET ME ADMIT that I opened this book not out of curiosity in the author's life, of which I knew from *The Countryman*, and not primarily interested in birds. I opened it because it is about islands, and I wanted to see what he had to say about those I knew. These came in the last chapters of the book, on the Faeroes and Westmann groups. So I began at the end. But I was soon back at the beginning, brooking no interruption to my reading, and ever since I have finished it I have become alert to birds. In the country I now go to where I know two herons are; in my mind I sort out the fulmars, kittiwakes, guillemots from my memory of northern wing-flashing waters. That is the effect of *I Know An Island* on me. I know that you do not have to be an ornithologist to appreciate the author's studies, and I do not think you need necessarily be of that tribe (to which I belong) that loves islands. Mr. Lockley does not attempt to justify his own way of living on Skokholm, a small island off Pembrokeshire, and he does not attempt to convert to it. He tells how he lives the life that satisfies him, and he goes ahead with his quest—for Leach's fork-tailed petrel. He found it on Sudurey, one of the Westmann group off Iceland, after a search which had taken him to Bardsey, the Blaskets, Heligoland, Fair Isle, the Orkneys, the Faeroes. And all the other

things he found he describes, too, including the filming of his picture *The Private Life of the Gannets* with Julian Huxley on Grassholm. Apart from Leach's petrel, he went to the Faeroes so as to "see how people lived and find out why they continued to be happy with a climate much worse than our own". A man who can give such reason for his roving seems to me to need no further recommendation. I shall only say that the excellent story is enhanced by good writing and the book is illustrated with brilliant photographs, which gain enormously by being "bled" on the page.

TED BERGEN

AT THE TURN OF THE TIDE. RICHARD PERRY.
Illustrated. Lindsay Drummond. 12s. 6d.

WILD ANIMALS IN BRITAIN. FRANCES PITT.
Illustrated. Batsford. 8s. 6d.

BIRD-WATCHERS RANGE from cabinet ministers to cats ; though aims and methods differ, each is conditioned by one constant factor, the volatility of their prey. Human watchers, in particular, have to cultivate a degree of mental and physical concentration quite alien to their species. Cramp and muscular indignation, and the seeping consciousness of damp, clinging and spreading coldly over widening areas of delicate skin, all must be borne unmoved. And even when the sternest rigours are not required, anticipation inevitably heightens the significance of the fleeting moment. Bird-watching is not, then, the simple recording of fact but a complex and largely subjective relation between watcher and watched. Mr. Perry has tried to convey something of this relation by adopting "Truth is beauty, beauty truth"

as his motto. It is unfortunate that his conception of beauty in prose should be a cataract of adjectives, inversions, and hyphenated phrases that cloud his meaning and only occasionally illumine his observation. On occasion he has to resort to a footnote to explain the meaning of what should have been a simple phrase. Yet Mr. Perry knows his saltings well, and has much that is interesting to tell of the sea birds and migrating flocks that keep the lonely marshes continually alive. He has an inquiring mind, his speculations are always provocative even if one doubts their ultimate truth. The book is well produced and illustrated, but is so high a price justified?

Our Miss Pitt has from time to time made pets of a good proportion of our native animals, and it is regrettable that insuperable physical limitations have prevented her from completing the gamut. One can picture with what pleasure she would welcome even a whale into her domestic entourage, give it an apposite name, discover its endearing characteristics and if possible record that it was faithful to its spouse. Her book contains a useful and adequate description of each British Mammal, enlivened with much personal observation, and stories about her pets. The author combines a great deal of accurate observation with some rather loose thinking. For instance she dismisses as ill-founded the theory that the stoat hypnotizes the rabbit, preferring to suppose that "rabbit psychology is very strange". Nor will every one agree that the only hope of preserving many of our wild animals is by the encouragement of that stylized, sacrificial slaughter the English call sport. The book is illustrated with more than a hundred fascinating photographs.

D. STURGE-MOORE

FOOD

SCIENCE AND NUTRITION. A. L. BACHARACH.
Watts. 2s. 6d.

HERE IS AN outline of nutritional science written by one who has had thirty years' training and practice as a chemist. He gives a chemical interpretation of "what happens when certain living organisms kill, eat, and inwardly digest (or try to) certain other living organisms".

Nutrition is an "arm" more urgent in the long run than more obvious weapons of defence. But nutrition is not solely a "war" factor. Malnutrition is the chronic enemy of millions in this and in other countries.

This chemist's last words in the book are: "For the vast majority of the world's workers what is wanted is not mainly an altered order of courses, or even a better cook and kitchen, but simply more money. With that will inevitably come the purchase of more food by those who need it, and the rest will follow." Read, then, the outlines of chemistry of food absorbed by the human body. With perfect clarity the author traces his experiments on rats and gives his present sum of knowledge of the reactions of the animal to the foods of known chemical composition. The results establish the causes of "deficiency" disease and point to the standards of optimum nutrition. It is not possible here to trace the elaborate processes of the chemistry of organic and inorganic compounds in the animal system. You can have all the secrets of catabolism, anabolism, and metabolism, and the mysteries of hormones and vitamins.

The exact knowledge set forth in this book provides excellent reading, even for one ignorant of chemistry.

The arguments for a bio-chemical basis for achieving adequate nutrition are apparently beyond dispute.

RHODA HIND

TAKE FORTY EGGS. BASIL COLLIER and HELEN KAPP. Illustrated. Gollancz. 6s.

SOYER WOULD HAVE liked this book. So will those who have seen Boulestin's *Scratch Meal* film. And many others. The answer to the title is, of course, implicitly, "throw them away." If you can't bring yourself to do that, you may make a ham puff; "a delicate dish for smoking concerts, etc." To do this, you "tie some thin slices of ham to pieces of thread. Fasten the other ends to the window-sill. Allow the pieces to float gently in a warm breeze till cooked through." If that doesn't appeal to you, you may learn that on pork chops "a considerable economy may be effected by chopping them at home". Most of the recipes are what is known, but rarely pronounced, as succinct; thus "Eagles, seldom eaten," "Farinaceous foodstuffs, full of starch, see Shirts, Boiled." "Xylophones—these have absolutely nothing to do with cookery and the prudent housewife will do best to ignore them." My own favourite receipt is, however, for *Sauce Roast Gander*.

Proceed in accordance with recipe on page 197 for Spaghetti Napolitaine A La Ernest Wilkins With Pigs' Feet In Aspic, but substitute a tin of sweet corn for the chickens' livers, milk for the breadcrumbs, and a good pinch of bicarbonate of soda for the sherry. See also that the parsley is boiled instead of fried and that the dish is taken off the fire five minutes before it gets hot.

Admittedly, these may not be everyone's cup of tea. But let them not lose heart. Instructions on "Household Mismanagement" provide invaluable information.

"At one o'clock luncheon will be served, and may be either eaten or simply allowed to get cold, as preferred." The chef's hat is "to prevent your hair from falling out and getting in the soup. If you wear a wig, you may find it more convenient to take it off and hang it on a nail". Hints on "Dropping into Tea" come under three divisions—Macaroons, Monocles, and Guests. Vulgar as most cook books, this one at least had the virtue of having held up this paper whilst the editor and staff roared with laughter as I explained why it was impossible to quote all I wished. But even they didn't really seem to think Will Hay was outdone by the definition of hake, "three kinds, boiled, fried and stomach." Perhaps no one but myself will. But perhaps no one but myself has suffered so much from those tables de far from hot, in restaurants which owe their fame and their finance to serving baked beans without the pork (they are that mean) among either peach mirrors or paper cloths . . .

G. R. N. LIST

PORTRAIT OF A CHEF. HELEN MORRIS. Illustrated.
Cambridge. 10s. 6d.

IF YOU ARE one of those to whom "the kitchens of the Reform" mean what they should, no recommendation is needed to this book. The portrait is that of Soyer. If you are not, and have heard neither of his books nor his sauces, a brief outline is necessary, to explain why this portrait should have its place on the line. Soyer designed the famous kitchens of the Reform club, where he reigned for twenty-five years. Most famous of chefs of his time, he differed from almost all in any era by the multiplicity of both his talents and tastes.

He not only made so many recipes that he could not take them up, but sold them to Crosse and Blackwell; he invented also an appliance for rescuing the drowning, a device for keeping money in the heels of boots, naval kitchens, pantomime illusions, a canning process, innumerable cooking utensils, including two widely differing types of stove. One was a "Magic Stove", which could be carried in the pocket. The other is one which has been used in the British Army for the last eighty years.

It is this latter invention which gives us Soyer's greatness. For though he created dishes costing a hundred pounds, and ran a fabulous restaurant in Lady Blessington's Gore House (where the Albert Hall now stands), he also fed the starving Irish in the hungry forties, ran a soup kitchen making soup at three farthings a quart, and gave a dinner to twenty thousand of London's poor out of his own pocket. Finally, in his own line he was during the Crimean War what Florence Nightingale was in nursing. Leaving his luxurious London life, he became her loyal colleague and saved thousands of lives simply by showing that even the rations then served could be made palatable by sane cooking. He worked ceaselessly in the Crimea, and with it all never lost his gaiety and flamboyance. The life brought about his death but not before, in 1858, he had seen his model kitchens installed in Wellington Barracks.

Such was Soyer whose life is here written. The author does not bring us very near to the man; we close the book a little disappointed that we do not know more of the mind that made so much possible—the way he worked is taken for granted. But we are

disappointed only because the portrait is of a man we would like to know better, and it is with the greatest reluctance that I forbid myself from quoting indefinitely more of the details of this chef whose own works sold ten thousand copies on the day of publication, whilst those of his wife were to be seen in the Royal Academy when she was thirteen.

G. R. N. LIST

POETRY

THE END OF FEAR. DENIS SAURAT. Faber. 6s.

SOLITUDE. V. SACKVILLE WEST. Hogarth Press.

5s.

POEMS. KENNETH ALLOTT. Hogarth Press. 5s.

POEMS. SHEILA WINGFIELD. Cresset Press. 3s. 6d.

THE LOWLAND VENUS. STELLA GIBBONS.

Longmans. 3s. 6d.

STONY GROUND. EISDELL TUCKER. Macmillan.

4s. 6d.

DARK BLUE SUNLIGHT. STANLEY RICHARDSON.

Simpkin Marshall. 2s. 6d.

THIS IS AN altogether extraordinary exhibition of the mannequin Muses: opening with Professor Saurat's rather mystical presentation of his mother, dressed in a rickety prose; followed by Miss Sackville West's appearance in Wordsworth's almost outworn weeds; continuing through Mr. Kenneth Allott's expert assumption of Auden's singing robe: a pair of ladies, Miss Sheila Wingfield and Miss or Mrs. Stella Gibbons, who are definitely not so hot: and concluding with

a volume which I at first mistook for a Lever Brother's brochure, entitled *Dark Blue Sunlight*. But no, I reflected, they cannot do that with soap.

Professor Saurat's investigation of racial memory has really no right in this collection : it is a peculiar document which may prove to be of considerable value to experimental psychologists but is of little extrinsic significance to the reviewer of verse : it is the raw material of poetry awaiting its crucial apotheosis into poems. I leave it with a query and proceed to Miss Sackville West's contribution. This is a fine big bogus poem consisting largely of such statements as : "Beauty I loved, and mixed with beauty, pain." I could omit to point out that rheumatism already reveals itself more clearly in that line than it does in Marlowe's three hundred year old : "What is beauty, saith my suffering then ?"

The publication of Mr. Kenneth Allott's poems goes to show how quickly the idiom invented by a popular poet can serve the turn of poets too lazy or too afraid to invent their own idiom. Mr. Allott can write poetry almost as well as W. H. Auden, but W. H. Auden has written it all before. When, now and then, Mr. Allott, stepping out of his fashionable apparatus, writes a poem of his own, it has a simplicity and a lucidity which creates a real lyricism. Then one can forget such lines as : "We who have been educated out of naïve responses."

Of the remaining contributions I can say very little except that I find them not good : in spite of the fact that Miss or Mrs. Wingfield's verses have provided Mr. Walter de la Mare with "delight", Mr. James Stephens with "delight", and that Mr. W. B. Yeats

considers them "remarkable". Miss Gibbons and Miss Tucker and Mr. Richardson reveal little talent as poets, and no competence as versifiers.

GEORGE BARKER

TRANSLATIONS

THE ANALECTS OF CONFUCIUS. Translated and annotated by ARTHUR WALEY. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

IT IS ESSENTIAL to-day to understand something of Chinese thought. The gigantic struggle now going on in the Far East is not simply a war between China and Japan, but a conflict between ancient and modern thought. Undoubtedly the Chinese armies are handicapped through lack of enough scientifically trained men; equally the strength of their resistance, so unexpected by the West, derives to some extent from the tradition of their past.

Most of us have heard of Confucius but few of us have read his Analects nor do we form as a rule, any clear picture of his philosophy. What is known about his life is meagre, as Mr. Waley points out in his excellent introduction, but it is interesting to note that he was a Knight, and therefore occupied only a subordinate political position in a land where action was ranked as lesser than book scholarship.

It is not possible within the limits of a short review to discuss the religious ideas of Confucius. It must be remembered that they have influenced millions of people for over two thousand years. The Western reader will be impressed by the fact that they are rather rules of conduct, a guide for the ruler or the judge, than religious

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in a European sense of the term. In fact they could be commended to the business man, "if you let yourself be distracted by minor considerations, nothing important will ever get finished." It is only a pity that Mr. Waley has chosen to translate the ideal man of the Chinese scholar by the word "gentleman" that has lost its meaning in contemporary English, and suggests merely stores, advertisements, or the prospectus of a school.

Few people in England will be competent to judge the translation, classic Chinese being possibly the most difficult language in the world. We must be grateful to Mr. Waley for having given us the possibility to read the sayings in excellent prose, with many notes on difficult passages. It is certainly a book that will be essential to any student of Chinese thought.

MORID SPALDING

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lamented the good days now past that he had spent in the Court of Vienna.

Walther possessed a burning integrity in love and politics, coupled with a rare tolerance. His translator, Ian Colvin, appreciates all the facets of his character. He has selected songs to cover the whole range of Walther's enthusiasms and despairs. These and the preface, short but crowded with detail like a mediæval tapestry, present a rounded picture of the poet.

As a translator Mr. Colvin is to be praised. He has produced verses that read as English, reminding one now of Shakespeare's songs, now of Crashaw and Donne, with their tautness and cadence. There is no pre-Raphaelite medievalism; none of the unevenness that reveals the struggle with which the recalcitrant material was forced into the mould. The sensitiveness and ease of Mr. Colvin's verses is remarkable, especially in view of the closeness he keeps to the German text, to the metre and rhymes. Here and there he loses some verbal implication; he probably regrets it as much as anyone. Some of the original's subtlety of rhythm is missing; one suspects that if it had been preserved, the result would have run far less easily in English. As they stand the verses are admirable for reading—especially aloud, and doubtless, like the original, for singing. The patience and skill that went to the making of them might produce a good English Villon.

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seedling or a private joke, twinkles some instance of humanity, a vegetation grotesque or harmless which holds the soil together. In a provincial French town, in the third year of the War, the war of corruption is also going on under the skin. The "sentimental wonderless" are licking a general's boots at an afternoon party to present a decoration; the teachers and intellectuals are unhappy enough to conform, or merely stupid enough to rebel "idealistically"; and the dead souls clap their hands at the war and their beastly byword is "slacker". Dragging himself over them all from the school where he teaches philosophy, dragging himself along on his gigantic crippled feet, is the ghastly Cripure (his pupils called him that from the Cripure of Tique Reason), who practised contempt, "but at the same time was greatly attached to what he contemned," and who, in the eyes of men whom he did not allow to be his friends, came to signify the Human Spirit.

"They" are epitomized in a conversation between the cynical bureaucrat Kaminsky and his mistress, when he speaks of Goncharov devoting a whole book "to portraying an individual who spits in the draperies, out of boredom". "Oh!" exclaimed Simone, "my father doesn't spit in the draperies. He's too busy fleecing others for that. But whenever he has a moment to spare, he writes anonymous letters and defaces borrowed books."

If, in his search for *community*, Cripure follows his contempt and hatred far enough, they bring him to a theory of forgiveness, and that is a cowardice which he cannot face; his failure takes other forms. The young soldiers who had been his pupils need, not forgiveness, but justification; and he cannot justify even them,

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because they do not go far enough, either spiritually or in action. And if "they" were to be forgiven, then Nabucet the boot-licker, the platitudinarian, the tastelessly odious Nabucet, would share in the forgiveness extended over the little Chinese man he remembers—long ago a small silent Chinese man went amok in the night down the Champs Elysées, shooting with a revolver, "his yellow shoes flashing like mechanical birds," to be overtaken and pummelled to death by policemen. The question for Cripure is: "Have you a belief in mankind?" He does not answer it, but poses it magnificently in his own person. Grotesque, sick, and tragic, he makes the impact of a great beetling Quixote or one of Balzac's titles which are like a star.

What is clear is that there is still some more positive statement to come out in Guilloux's work, since his powerful vision of a neurotic society does not stop short at the outlines of his age, but fills out into something we call life. Its symbology is not formal, its reality is far from being photographic, which accounts for its being to me twice as strong meat as the twenty-four hours of Mister Bloom.

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